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COMPETITIVE POSITIONING : A STUDY OF RECRUITERS' AND
EMPLOYERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE SLOAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

by..

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, Sloan School's external relations have been of increasing concern to students, alumni, faculty, and administrative staff. The area of external relations covers such diverse groups as potential students, faculty at other business schools, the media, and corporations. In addition, there are a number of exchanges which continually take place between Sloan and these other groups, such as sponsored research, endowments, and employment of graduates. This thesis focuses only on the recruiter and employer groups and examines their perceptions of one of our "products", namely graduates. recent years, Sloan School's external relations have been of addition, there are a number of exchanges which continually take place

The main goal of this study is to determine the attributes and the underlying perceptual dimensions on which business schools and their graduates are evaluated, and to assess how Sloan is rated on each. The perceptions of Sloan students against those of students of other business schools and against how we perceive our students' abilities are compared.

The analysis of the perceptions is based on the results of focus group interviews and on the responses to a mail survey which was administered to individuals who recruit, hire or employ business school graduates. The focus group interviews provided qualitative information on which attributes are important in the evaluation of a school and its students, and, specifically, how Sloan is perceived with respect to these critical characteristics. The mail survey was designed to quantitatively explore recruiters' perceptions of Sloan and other business schools, and, using standard perceptual mapping methodology, to assess our competitive positioning.

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CHAPTER 1 : INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE OF STUDY

A. BACKGROUND

In a 1978 article entitled "The Great MBA Talent Hunt"¹, the introductory passage reads, "Universities in this country are churning out Master of Business Administration graduates as if a new Industrial Revolution were spurring them on ... business and industry are pouncing on them with open wallets". Until recently this was typical of the attitudes towards the MBA "ticket to success" degree. Graduates of the more prestigious schools were particularly well positioned to take advantage of the seemingly unlimited opportunities open to them.

Recently, however, several factors have forced students, faculty and administrative personnel of even the best schools to re-evaluate their positions in a changed market. Most notable among these factors are the increasing number of MBA's, economic pressures, and substantial corporate criticisms leveled against programs and their graduates.

The increase in MBA's has been dramatic. The number of individuals receiving the degree increased from 4,643 in 1960 to 21,599 in 1970 and 54,000 in 1981². This year, 57,600 students are expected to graduate³. The Wall Street Journal article indicates that the number is expected to level out at

59,000 in the mid 1980's and decline to 55,000 by 1989. Until the figure levels off, however, opportunities for MBA's are likely to become more and more limited. Each school has to find ways to compete more effectively in placing their graduates in an increasingly competitive market.

At the same time that MBA graduates are increasing in number, economic conditions, especially inflation and recession, are putting pressure on students, business schools, and recruiting organizations alike. Economic pressures have had many different effects, including making it more difficult for a school to solicit funds, raising the operating costs of universities, and restricting the choices of potential students to less expensive programs. More relevant to this study is that corporate recruiting has been reduced considerably. Predictably, the most drastic drop in recruiting comes from the industries most affected by economic conditions such as the automobile, paper, and construction industries. Many companies have cut hiring by 50% or more and have switched to recruiting at second-tier schools where they feel that they can get more value for their limited recruiting dollars. Thus even the top-tier schools are feeling the effects of fewer companies recruiting for fewer positions.

The third factor which has lead to urgent introspection in business schools is the recent spate of criticisms leveled at MBA's, especially those from prestigious schools. The

disenchantment is based on a variety of issues - unjustified arrogance, lack of loyalty, inability to communicate, orientation towards short-term performance only, over-reliance on mathematical techniques, insensitivity to social concerns, ignorance of the real-world operations of business, lack of focus on international development, etc. The result of this dissatisfaction has been a switch on the part of many companies from graduates of top schools to lower-priced MBA's from other schools and even from MBA's in general to undergraduate candidates.

As a result of these factors, business schools are going to great lengths to attract more companies to their placement offices and to make their graduates more attractive to recruiting organizations. No longer is complacency an acceptable strategy, irrespective of the competitive position of a school.

This study has grown out of the Sloan School of Management's desire to investigate their own competitive position.

B. THE SLOAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

The school has traditionally prided itself on its preeminence as an institution of advanced business education, on its commitment to impacting the practice of management, adopting a

unique approach to linking theory and application, and being responsive to the needs of the business community. Nevertheless, we are discovering that we are not immune to the increasing market pressures. In a Business Week article⁴ entitled, "The MBA Glut is Now Hitting the Top 10", the drop in prospective employers at Sloan from 166 last year to 136 this year is mentioned. This coincides with the experiences of many of the 59 members of the class of 1982 and especially the first-year students. Both groups are finding it difficult to get suitable employment, with fewer companies to choose from and fewer positions being offered by each. In addition, there is a growing feeling of disenchantment with prospects in certain functions - for example, marketing, human resources management and operations management - and in certain industries - for example, investment banking, advertising, real estate and business journals. While the current economic situation is exacerbating this, opportunities open to Sloan graduates have historically been limited in these areas. These sentiments were evident from the results of a recent survey of all Sloan students which asked which industries and functional areas are not well represented at Sloan by recruiting organizations. Comparisons with other schools gives further support : for example, only 2-3% of Sloan graduates per year have gone to consumer goods manufacturers in the last five years, whereas the corresponding figures are 4-8% for Stanford⁵. Similarly, for investment banking, the numbers are 2-5% for Sloan and 6-13% for Stanford. Related to

this is a realization that Sloan's external image is in many cases inconsistent with our own perceptions of our abilities. Equally importantly, we are discovering that Sloan is all too often omitted from the public's evoked set of top business schools and that many people are unaware of the strengths or even the existence of our programs.

The administrators of the school have not ignored the signals from the environment nor the problems which relate specifically to Sloan. Various task forces and committees have been established to study different aspects of our relationships with our numerous constituencies, and a number of studies, including this thesis, have been initiated as a result.

C. MEASUREMENTS OF RELATIVE SUCCESS/FAILURE

The previously discussed qualitative and quantitative data suggests that there is a serious problem with how attractive Sloan graduates are to industry. However, several commonly used measures indicate otherwise. The average starting salary for our graduates has been consistently at or above the means for other schools. The ratio of recruiting companies to students is also relatively high. This year, 133 companies recruited on-campus for 159 students, a ratio of 0.84. Corresponding figures for other schools are⁶ :

	<u>Companies</u>	<u>Students</u>	<u>Ratio</u>
Wharton	600	600	1.0
Stanford	250	300	0.83
Northwestern ⁷	325	475	0.78
Chicago	300	450	0.66
Harvard	300	700	0.43

Both the above measures are, however, inadequate. Average salary depends on a number of factors which differ across schools (but which are not necessarily related to the standing of the institution), including placement by geographical location, functional area and industry. The company:student ratio is also not too useful since different companies hire different numbers of graduates. Many firms are not in fact hiring any MBA's at all but currently recruit on campuses only to maintain contact with placement offices. Such measurements are thus not very useful, although they should not be ignored completely. Qualitative information is perhaps more useful and considerably enriches the picture. It becomes important to examine perceptions of schools and their graduates along multiple dimensions. A 1976 study⁸ examined the responses to two suggested new programs at Sloan by analyzing potential students' and recruiters' perceptions of and preferences for these and existing programs along multiple attributes. This type of analysis can yield substantially more information than looking at placement office statistics.

D. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This project is designed to determine the attributes and underlying perceptual dimensions on which business schools and their graduates are evaluated, and to both measure and qualitatively explore recruiters' perceptions of Sloan and the other top business schools. In this way, our current standing can be assessed in a meaningful way and a strategy for changing our competitive positioning can be developed.

Chapter 2 describes in detail the methodology used, while Chapters 3 & 4 are analytical in nature. The study concludes with a summary and consideration of strategic issues in Chapter 5.

Notes - Chapter 1

1. "The Great MBA Talent Hunt", Industry Week, October 16, 1978, p. 91.
2. "The Money Chase", Time, May 4, 1981, p. 58.
3. "New MBA's are Scrambling for Jobs as Recession Brings Drop in Hiring", Wall Street Journal, March 8, 1982, p. 29.
4. "The MBA Glut is now Hitting the Top 10", Business Week, March 15, 1982, p. 30.
5. "MBA Employment Survey 1981", Graduate School of Business, Stanford University, September 1981.
6. "MBA Placement, Some Comparisons" : Harbus News, February 8, 1982, p. 8.
7. "1982 Recruiting Season Belies Economic Slump", Printout, J.L.Kellogg Graduate School of Management, Northwestern University, Spring 1982.
8. Urban, Glen L. and Neslin, Scott A., The Design and Marketing of New Educational Programs, Alfred P. Sloan School of Management, Working Paper 873-76, 1976.

CHAPTER 2 : METHODOLOGY

A. GENERAL APPROACH

The study involved two distinct phases :

- running of focus group interviews
- administering of a survey

The results of the focus group interviews were used as input to the questionnaire design but otherwise the two phases were completely independent studies.

B. FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

1. Objectives

The specific objectives of the interviews were to :

- determine which attributes of business schools and their graduates are considered important by recruiting organizations ;
- explore perceptions of the Sloan School of Management and other business schools ;

- generate information to be used in designing a questionnaire for subsequent quantitative analysis.

2. The Focus Group Technique

The focus group interview is a widely used qualitative market research technique. It offers a means of obtaining in-depth information on a specific topic. The discussion group atmosphere allows the researcher to gain insight into the behavior, attitudes, and perceptions of the individual members. A good rapport is essential between the moderator and the participants and among the participants themselves. For this reason, a relaxed and natural setting is provided and members are urged to express their feeling as candidly as possible. Furthermore, the group is selected to be relatively homogeneous so that there is some unifying element out of which discussion can grow.

3. Research Methodology

Four focus group interviews were conducted at Sloan during the last two weeks in January. Each lasted approximately two hours, comprised of between 4 and 7 people, and took place in a dining room where a luncheon was served. The sessions were recorded but efforts were made to do this as unobtrusively as possible. Separate sessions were conducted for

representatives from investment banks, consulting firms, commercial banks and high-tech companies. Each group was comprised of a mix of people from the industry. Representatives of different sizes and types of companies were included and the participants themselves differed in terms of age, sex, business training and functional area.

C. THE SURVEY

1. Objectives

The survey was designed to :

- quantify recruiters' and employers' perceptions of Sloan and other top-tier business schools ;
- link preference to perceptions to enable recruiters' needs to be quantitatively assessed ;
- get data on respondents such as functional area and activity of company to explore possible segmentation variables ;
- answer specific questions such as recruiters' main sources of information and perceptions, attitudes towards management education in general, etc. ;

- provide a forum for respondents to express their qualitative opinions on management programs and their graduates.

2. Questionnaire design

The questionnaire was comprised of four sections :

- ratings of the respondent's evoked set of schools across 20 attributes on a 5-point Likert scale. Respondents were asked to rate Sloan and up to three other schools ;
- rankings of the rated schools ;
- eight questions relating to such information as the respondent's relationship with graduates, functional area, sources of information, activity of company, schools where he/she recruits, etc. ;
- three questions designed to solicit free-form comments on MBA's and management education programs in general.

A copy of the questionnaire, together with the cover letter, instructions and follow-up mailing are given in Appendix A.

A description of each of the four sections follows :

a. Attribute Ratings :

The focus group discussions covered a wide range of issues relating to business schools and MBA's. Participants used several hundred words and phrases to describe their feelings and, as Chapter 3 will describe in detail, these attributes were reduced to about 15 fairly distinct attribute groups. The 20 attribute statements in the questionnaire were drawn from these. Every attempt was made to include all relevant attributes to make subsequent analysis more meaningful. The order of the attribute statements was random, and randomly selected statements were expressed negatively to reduce response bias. Many statements were "composite" in nature, meaning that very closely related attributes were combined into one single question. This was done to reduce the number of attribute statements which would otherwise have been needed, and to qualify the basic attributes in order to facilitate unambiguous interpretation by the respondents.

As the survey instructions show, respondents were asked to rate Sloan and "three other comparable business schools of [their] choice ... even if [they] would not hire a graduate from the program". A more formal definition of an evoked set was originally included but pretesting showed that this was too easily misinterpreted or simply not read.

b. Ranking of Schools :

A simple question asked respondents to rank the schools they had just rated from most to least preferred. Alternative measures were considered, such as asking recruiters to assign points to the schools, but pretesting showed this to be too complicated.

c. Personal Data :

Question 1 asked respondents to indicate whether they believe that the differences among individual graduates at a school are more important than the differences across schools. Similarly, question 2 asked whether innate abilities of graduates are more important determinants of success than their management education.

Question 3 was included to segment respondents into those who are recruiters per se, those who participate in hiring decisions, and those who recruit at schools only to find graduates for their own departments. Many people fall into more than one of these categories, so respondents were asked to indicate which best describes their relationship with graduates.

In order to get some feel for how a school might go about trying to influence perceptions, respondents were asked in Question 4 to indicate the sources of their information and perceptions.

Questions 5 & 6 asked for functional area and company activity respectively, and were included to allow for segmentation analysis. Both lists were comprehensive - if necessary, they could be reduced to smaller sets of functions and industries respectively in the analysis phase.

Question 7 asked at which schools the respondent's company recruits. It was included since the analysis might have yielded common attributes among the schools, such as geographical proximity, common strengths of the programs, etc. As will be discussed later, responses to this question were finally excluded from the analysis since it was obvious that respondents interpreted the question in very different ways. Moreover, many were unable to supply comprehensive lists. Unfortunately, pretesting of the questionnaire did not bring to light these failings of the question.

Question 8 asked respondents to identify the schools at which they personally recruit. The reasons for its inclusion were to look for common aspects as well as to possibly segment the respondent population.

d. Free-form Comments :

In Questions 9 & 10, respondents were asked to comment on the characteristics of MBA's in general which they feel are generally lacking, and to suggest ways in which a graduate management program could better develop these attributes.

The final question asked respondents to give their opinions on any aspects not included in the survey.

3. The Cover Letter

The letter was addressed to each respondent individually and personally signed by Sloan's Associate Dean, Alvin Silk. This gave credibility to the statement in the letter that the respondent was one of a very small, but representative, sample and that their opinions were therefore critical to the success of the survey.

It was felt that it would be inappropriate to offer some tangible reward for completing the questionnaire, since that would not be consistent with Sloan's professional image. Moreover, respondents were guaranteed of complete anonymity and confidentiality. Pretesting indicated that recipients would probably feel motivated by the stated importance of their opinions as well as by their own vested interest in the meeting of their needs by management programs.

4. Pretesting of the Questionnaire

The cover letter and questionnaire were shown to 12 individuals at a bank and at a consulting company, both in the Boston area, as well as to several people in the Sloan community. The purpose of this was, firstly, to assess whether they would feel motivated to complete the questionnaire and, secondly, to identify parts which were unclear or ambiguous.

On the basis of their responses, several improvements were made to the cover letter, instructions, and to the order and wording of the questions.

5. Identification of Respondents

It is not immediately obvious who our target "consumers" are. For example, a person who recruits at Stanford may never recruit at Sloan simply due to geography. Furthermore, many people who participate in hiring decisions visit a particular school only because they are alumni - such individuals may never have occasion to participate in a decision of hiring a Sloan student. Many people who are involved in hiring MBA's never recruit on campuses - they see candidates only after someone else has screened students and invited a select few back to interview at the company offices.

With these limitations in mind, it was decided that the best way of identifying potential respondents would be to use lists of people who had recently recruited at the campuses of the top business schools. Some of these individuals are professional recruiters, while most are involved in other functional areas and recruit on-campus only occasionally. Some in this latter group recruit only for subordinates in their own departments or divisions. In this way, such lists would identify the three types of "recruiters". More importantly, all potential respondents would be decision-makers in their organizations' hiring processes.

The Placement Directors at six business schools were approached to provide lists of recruiters who had visited their schools recently. Some would not or could not assist, but Columbia and Stanford sent the requested information and Harvard made its career office resources available.

Potential respondents were randomly selected from these lists. An important point is that selection was across individuals, not companies. This meant that the sample was purposefully biased towards those companies which send many recruiters to campuses (presumably companies which hire many graduates) rather than treating all companies as equally important.

In view of the previous discussion about geographical proximity, the sample was purposefully biased towards schools in the local area. 333 questionnaires were sent to recruiters at the various schools as follows :

Sloan	155
Harvard	98
Columbia	45
Stanford	<u>35</u>
	333

Table 2.1 breaks down the sample by company activity.

6. Mailing and Follow-up

The survey package comprised of :

- the personalized cover letter ;
- questionnaire plus instructions ;
- return self-addressed envelope .

One week after the mailing, a printed card was sent (see Appendix A) to remind respondents to complete the questionnaire if they had not already done so, and to thank them if they had.

MANUFACTURING :

Electrical/Electronics	14%
Chemical/Pharmaceutical	7
Miscellaneous Consumer Goods	11
Textile/Paper	1
Energy	5
Other	5

NON-MANUFACTURING :

Commercial Banking	9
Investment Banking	14
Consulting	15
Computer-related Services	3
Accounting/Auditing	4
Miscellaneous Financial Services	2
Health/Education	-
Other	10

TOTAL	100%
-------	------

TABLE 2.1 : QUESTIONNAIRE RECIPIENTS BY COMPANY ACTIVITY

7. Survey Response

The response was excellent in the three or four weeks following the mailing. 107 questionnaires had been returned by the time it was decided to implement a cutoff, after which a further 12 questionnaires were received. For these 12 respondents, only the comments made in the last three questions were included in the analysis. In addition, 14 people sent letters, usually to express their appreciation for being included in the study and to say that their limited knowledge of Sloan made it difficult for them to be of help.

In summary, the following response rate was achieved as of May 1, 1982 :

Questionnaires sent out	333
Received before cut-off	107
Received after cut-off	10
Letters	<u>14</u>
Total	141

Response : 42%

Table 2.2 shows, for the 107 questionnaires used in the analysis, the number of respondents rating each school. Note that 14 respondents elected not to rate Sloan. It is both interesting and comforting to note that respondents' evoked sets generally included the top business schools. About 74% elected to rate Harvard, while only 29% rated Wharton, the next highest. Of course, the questionnaires were not sent to Wharton recruiters so that this point is not too significant. Many respondents included lesser-known schools in the Boston area as their "comparable" schools (Babson, Simmons, etc.), while others included technically oriented schools (such as RPI and Rochester). For the purposes of the computer analysis, the first 10 schools were individually processed, while all the rest were included under two "other" categories. If a respondent rated only one school other than the 10 individually included schools, data for this school was put in "Other1". If a respondent rated two of these schools, data for the first was included in "Other1" and for the second in "Other2". No respondent rated more than two "other schools" so that the database structure was sufficient to include all data.

Figures 2.1, 2.2, 2.3 & 2.4 show breakdowns of respondents by relationship with graduates, functional area, company activity, and schools at which they recruit respectively. It is not possible to assess whether the respondents were indeed a random sample from the recipient group. The only comparison

Sloan	93
Harvard	79
Wharton	31
Stanford	23
Chicago	22
Columbia	19
Northwestern	14
Amos Tuck	12
Carnegie-Mellon	9
Colgate-Darden (U.Va.)	8
OTHER :	
U.Michigan	7
NYU	5
Yale; Simmons; Cornell; UCLA; UC Berkeley	3
Rochester; Northeastern; RPI; U.Texas; USC	2
Babson; Tulane; SUNY(Albany); Kennedy School of Gov't.; B.U.; U.Washington; Indiana; Purdue; Emory; U. North Carolina; U. Western Ontario	1

TABLE 2.2 : NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS RATING EACH SCHOOL

FIGURE 2.1 · RESPONDENTS BY RELATIONSHIP WITH GRADUATES

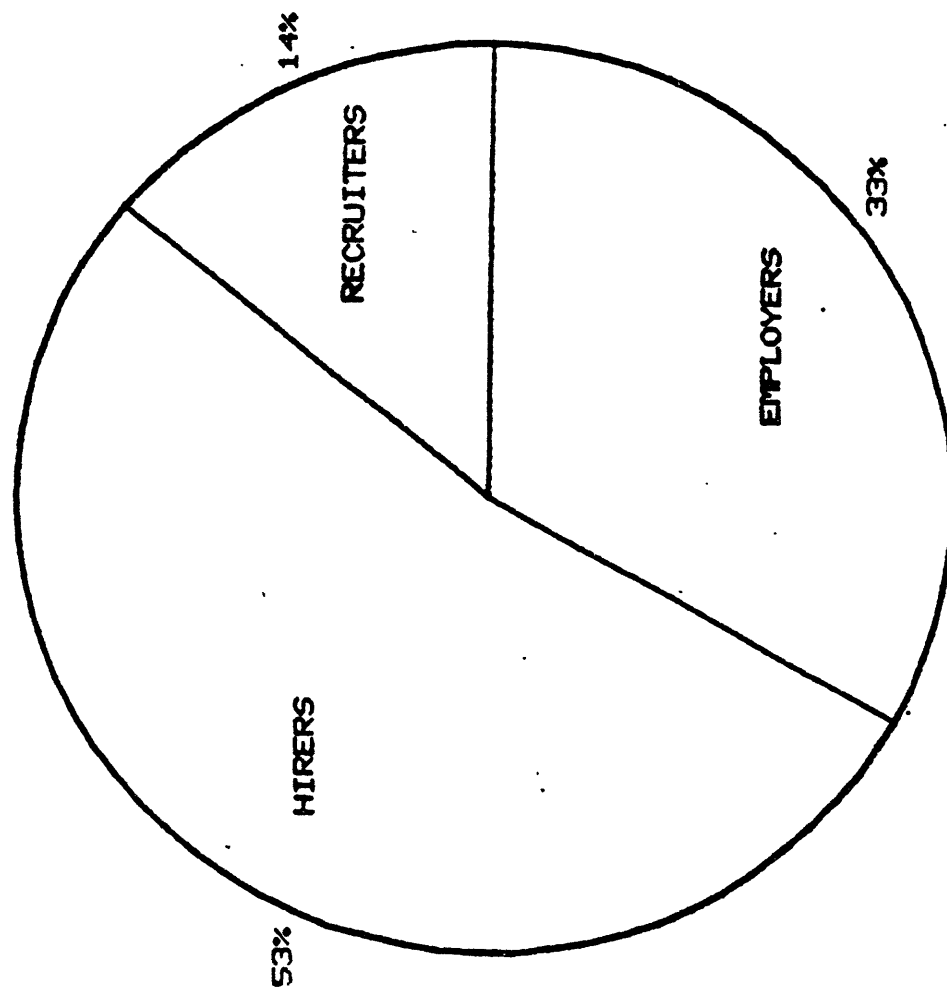


FIGURE 2.2 · RESPONDENTS BY FUNCTIONAL AREA

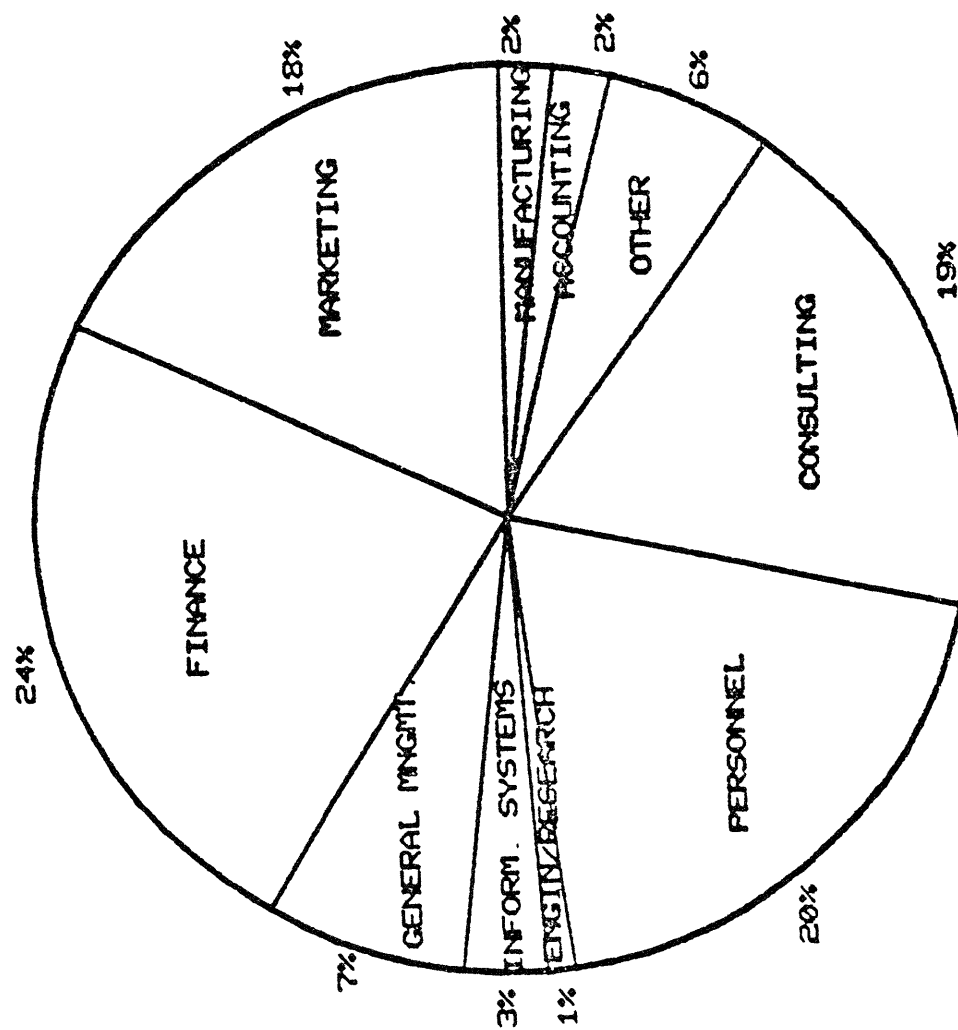
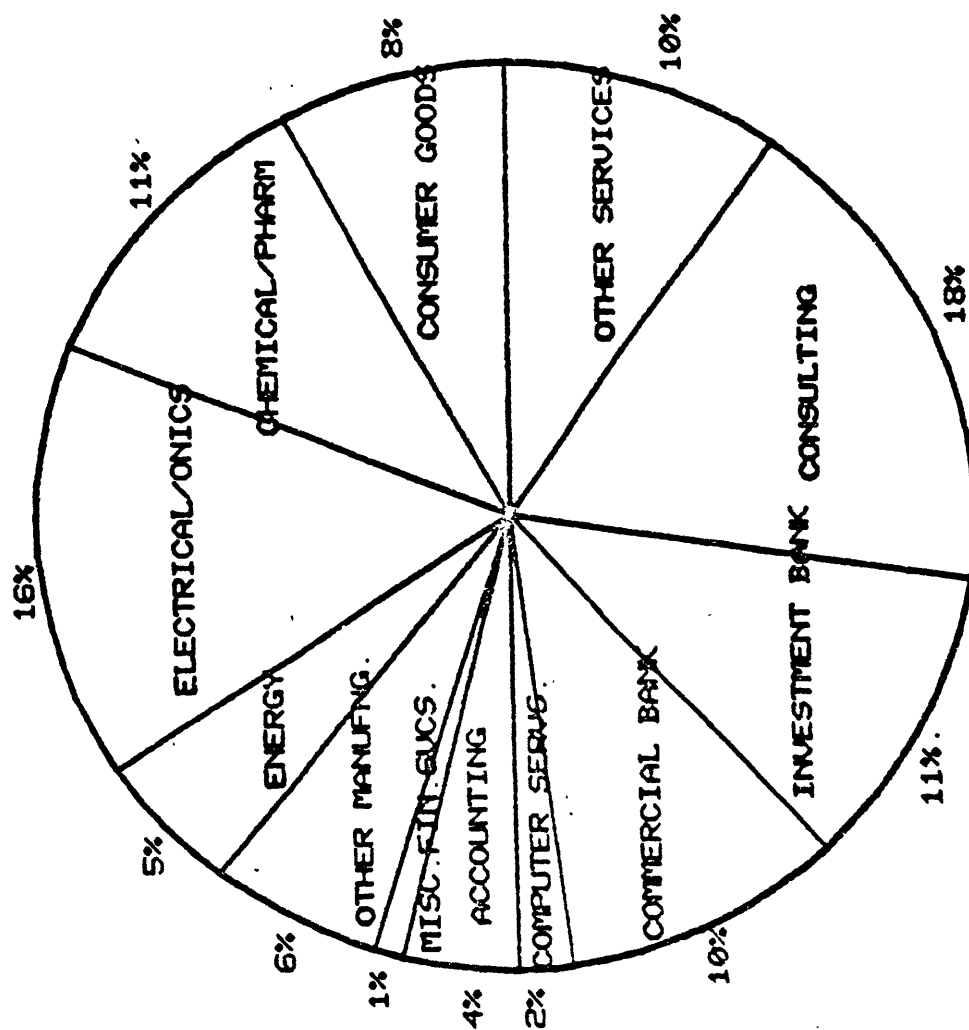


FIGURE 2.3 · RESPONDENTS BY COMPANY ACTIVITY



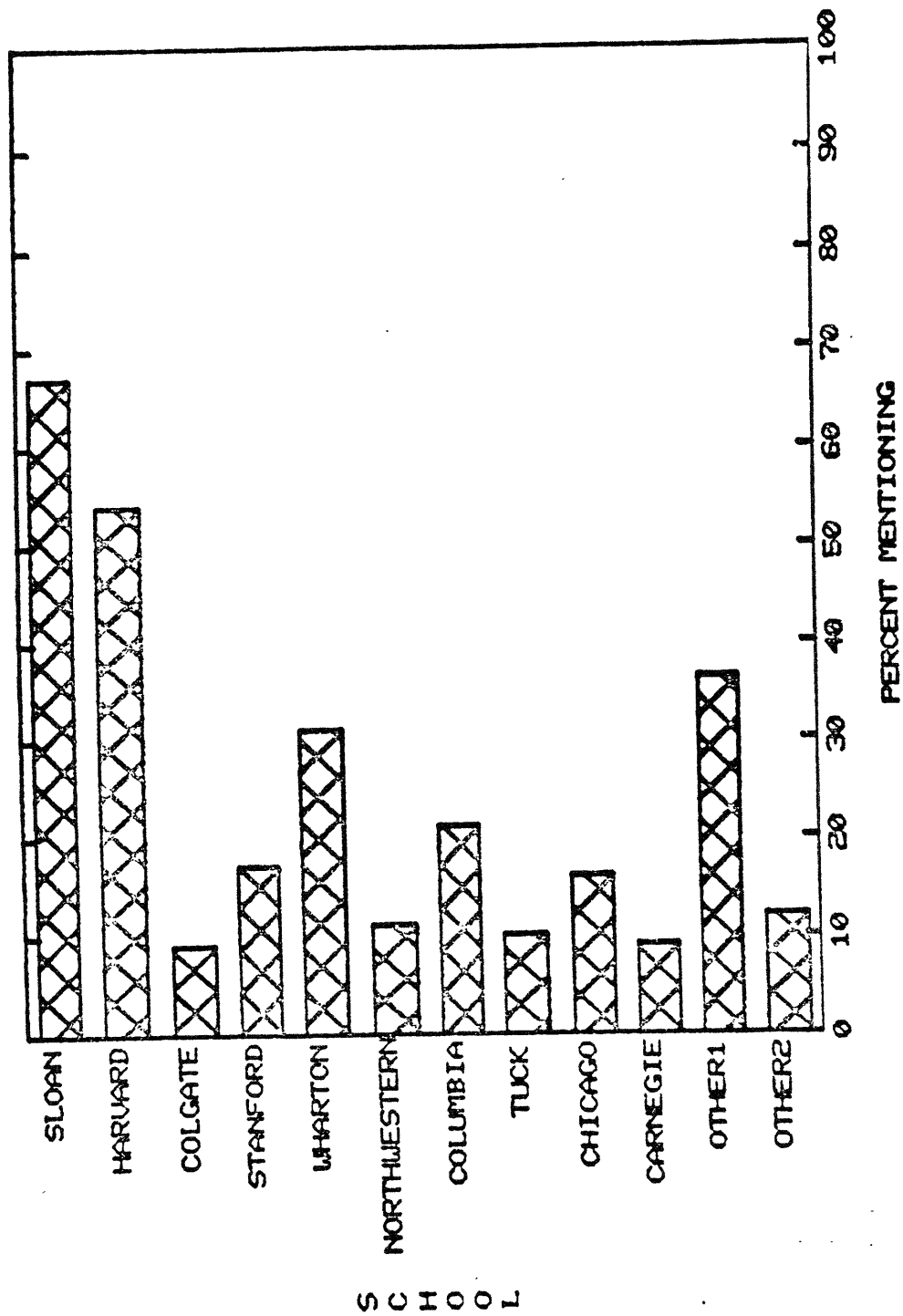


FIGURE 2.4 : WHERE RESPONDENTS RECRUIT

which can be made is on the basis of company activity. As can be seen in Figure 2.3, the breakdown on this variable very closely matches the breakdown of the recipient group given in Table 2.1. On this dimension, therefore, the respondent group seems to be a representative sample of the recipient group. It should also be noted that the breakdowns by relationship and functional area are proportional to what might be expected in an on-campus recruiter group. Finally, analysis of Figure 2.4 does not indicate any non-randomness; although 67% report that they recruit at Sloan, (while only 47% of the recipients were identified through the Sloan Placement Office), this may not necessarily indicate a response bias towards Sloan recruiters. It is feasible that many recruiters at Harvard, Stanford and Columbia also recruit or have recruited at Sloan. In the same way, the response figures for the three other schools are also higher than the corresponding mailing figures.

The breakdown by relationship in Figure 2.1 shows that only 14% of respondents are professional recruiters, while 53% merely participate in hiring decisions and 33% recruit subordinates for their own departments. Similarly, only 20% of respondents are involved in the personnel area, as Figure 2.2 indicates. This is not inconsistent with on-campus recruiting reality, but it should be borne in mind when considering how to reach "recruiters". Figure 2.2 shows that 60% of respondents are involved in the marketing, finance or

consulting areas. The numbers are fairly close to placement figures for Sloan graduates, except for marketing (18% of respondents versus 6-9% for Sloan placement). This is not an indicator of non-randomness either, since the response figure is very close to the placement figures for MBA's in general.

A similar picture emerges from analysis of Figure 2.3. 66% of respondents are from electrical/electronics or chemical/pharmaceutical manufacturers, commercial or investment banks, or consulting companies. As before, all figures are fairly close to Sloan placement data, with the exception of investment banking (11% of respondents versus 2-5% for Sloan placement) and consumer goods manufacturers (8% versus 2-3%). Again, these percentages are very close to overall MBA hiring breakdowns.

To summarize, there do not appear to be any reasons to suspect that the initial sample was not representative of today's "target market" for Sloan, nor that the responses received were not a representative sample of the questionnaire recipients.

8. Analysis of the Survey

All data was coded and entered into a database which was analysed using EXPRESS. As mentioned earlier, ratings for a given school were associated with the name of the school for

the 10 most commonly rated programs, but put in "other" categories otherwise.

All ratings for negatively stated attribute statements were reversed (i.e. a "2" was changed to a "4", a "5" to a "1", etc.) and the resulting ratings matrices were standardized for each individual. All analyses were based on the standardized scores.

In Chapters 3 & 4, the focus group interviews and surveys are analysed in detail.

CHAPTER 3 : ANALYSIS OF THE FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

In this report of the findings, differences among groups are noted where appropriate; otherwise, findings are based on all respondents. Statements do not necessarily apply to all individuals but should rather be viewed as the opinions of a significant portion of the respondents. Quotes are included to enrich, support and expand upon the analysis and to convey the semantics used by recruiters.

The findings are based on how respondents see things from their own frames of reference and explain their opinions in their own words. As such, the views they express may not be consistent with objective reality, but on the other hand will be correlated with their actual behavior. In reporting the findings, an attempt has been made to be objective, but results of any qualitative research may be based to some extent on the subjectivity of the analyst. The reader should interpret the quotes and statements accordingly.

A. FINDINGS REGARDING THE EXTENT TO WHICH PERCEPTUAL DIFFERENCES EXIST

Some people believe that there are hardly any differences among the top business schools. They assume that a company is just as likely to find a candidate with the desired background and abilities at one school as at another.

- It's a natural selection process that they're at these schools.
- We don't go to a particular school to fill a particular position.
- The school from where they come is not necessarily a predictor of how they are going to perform.
- We tend to focus on the north-east schools.
- There's a tremendous overlap - if you were to look at the top 5 or 10 schools, probably 50% of the people would fit into any of these schools.

More generally, however, schools are perceived very differently on a number of dimensions. Graduates of a school are often referred to as if they are a homogeneous but distinctive group.

- The people at Harvard have it all - they're smart; well educated, they think, they have a kind of level of experience and maturity, leadership and presence.
- Sloan grads are strong in the financial analysis area, quantitative analysis of marketing, ...

However, not all business schools have equally distinctive images. People find it easier to fit Chicago, Sloan and Harvard into boxes than other schools.

- You have Harvard which has an image and Sloan and Chicago with an image, but all the rest seem to be somewhere in the middle.
- Wharton does not have a coherent profile. You can't typecast it easily.

- Stanford is not quite as good as either extreme - they don't have that ability to sum it all up as a Harvard student does and they don't have as strong an intellectual background as a Sloan or Chicago student.

Each recruiter has a favored school or set of schools. However, recruiters differ more in their weighting of attributes than on the evaluations of the various schools on each attribute. Thus, this lack of consensus is more a result of different needs than of different perceptions. In other words, even though person A may favor Chicago and person B may favor Wharton, it is not so much because they disagree over the types of graduates which Chicago and Wharton tend to produce but more because they simply need different types of people.

The choice set is, to a large extent, a function of four factors :

a) Industry :

- The Wharton school is more hospitable towards commercial banking.
- For my purposes, this program is head and shoulders above the rest. (high-tech)
- If you're going to be doing high-tech marketing or high-tech development, then you have to go to Sloan or Carnegie-Mellon.

b) Functional orientation :

- This is not the right place to look for people in marketing.
 - Columbia probably captures the accounting market.
 - Sloan does have a certain preeminence in finance.
 - The positions that we go after the Harvard MBA for really have no overlap with the positions we go after Sloan MBA's for.
 - I think the awareness of Sloan as one of the top 5 or 6 programs is very clear.
- I wouldn't say that's the case outside of technical areas. (both from high-tech)

c) Limited experience and random observations :

- Our experience, even though it's a very small sample , has been that Sloan people ...
 - We find that Wharton people can't do anything.
- We find them really good. (both consultants)

d) An "old boys network" :

- But your Harvard - if it's 800 a year for 40 years and very strong alumni groups - they tend to hire their own.
- You gotta get a few people placed to start with - get the thin edge of the wedge in.

Participants very often maintained that their perceptions are based on experience with graduates. They acknowledge, however, that the samples are very small, particularly of Sloan alumni. In addition to this, it is possible that

recruiters interpret their experiences to match their preconceived, stereotyped images of graduates of a particular school. Thus although the perceptions are relatively easy to identify, the sources of these perceptions are not.

B. FINDINGS REGARDING SPECIFIC ATTRIBUTES

The focus group respondents discussed many different attributes of business schools and the graduates they produce and how these attributes relate to their needs. Identification of these characteristics and the language used to describe them was critical input for the design of the questionnaire. A summary list of the evoked attributes of candidates and of schools, as given in Tables 3.1(a) and 3.1(b) respectively, is helpful in gaining an overall picture of what is involved in recruiters' choices of schools and candidates. The range of abilities, talents and personality traits deemed relevant is considerable. The potential implications for Sloan extend from strategic positioning through operating decisions, from admissions requirements through the placement process, and from program structure through teaching methods and extracurricular programs.

An underlying assumption and common thread in all four focus groups is that recruiters see MBA graduates and their schools only in terms of potential contribution to their

organizations, and they expect it within a very short period of time. They do not pretend to place a value, societal or otherwise, on the education itself. They openly acknowledge that MBA's are expensive to recruit and employ. These sentiments were a foregone conclusion in all discussions and were articulated in some cases.

- ... if they're getting education for education's sake, then we don't need that.
- We have no interest if the program is a step to a Ph.D.
- The honeymoon is about three months after which they're no longer from Sloan, but at [company].
- The expectation from our point of view is that we're going to pay up for an MBA who's productivity is near term.
- MBA's are too expensive. Period.
- There's a low tolerance for a long acclimation process - 90 days - Bang!

The following analysis of the attributes will shed more light on what is meant by "contribution" and also indicate how Sloan measures up on each.

1. Technical Training, Analytical Skills and Theoretical Knowledge

Sloan is known to produce graduates who are very strong with respect to these attributes. Recruiters believe that we have a high proportion of people with engineering backgrounds and

that the rigorous nature of the coursework further develops the skills associated with a technical orientation. These abilities are seen as especially important in some industries such as high-tech and in certain functional areas such as MIS.

- The theoretical background is an advantage.
- [Sloan graduates have] good analytical skills, reasoning and problem-solving abilities because of the academic, rigorous approach in all the courses.
- I want people with a strong technical background. (high-tech)
- Number one, you're in a very scientific, technological environment to start with. Number two, you have a much larger percentage of students with technical undergrad degrees and advanced degrees.
- Sloan is the only grad school we know of where it is assumed you know calculus when you come here.
- I feel that the lack of quantitative skills in a Harvard grad is a major shortcoming.
- Sloan grads really know how to organize info.

High-tech people believe that this orientation will become more essential in the future, even for top management positions.

- We're going to see more and more key managers having some access to a computer directly personally - they are going to have to comprehend the kind of analytical thought processes that you are very good at.
- I wouldn't be surprised if the future leaders of industry are going to be more technically oriented people as opposed to the generalist.

However, most people do not see the technical background and emphasis in such a positive light. Recruiters believe that there are serious resulting deficiencies in a number of the other important attributes. This ambivalent attitude will be further examined as each attribute is discussed.

2. Knowledge of the Industry and the Company and Definition of Career Direction

With the exception of the high-tech companies, all the groups felt strongly that a student must demonstrate a realistic understanding of the industry as a whole and the company in particular; this allows the student to make a more informed decision about career direction. In turn, this self-selection means that the interviewing process is more productive for the recruiter and the likelihood of attrition is lower for the organization. Sloan is particularly harshly evaluated on these factors.

- You could be a finance major here and really not know what commercial banking is all about.
- Interviewees didn't know what they wanted to do, what specialty or what industry.
- When interviewing, the students ought to understand what the business is all about and some of the differences between the firms.
- The Wharton students by and large and the Northwestern students have a much more than superficial knowledge of how banks differ.

- People are misselecting themselves.
- You would do everyone a great favor if you could talk most of your students out of consulting and make a clear distinction between what's involved in consulting versus management in large corporations.

The case method, rather than a theoretical approach, is seen as a positive factor in this regard, but there are other ways for students to assimilate this knowledge, including guest speakers, extracurricular student clubs and specialized real-world courses.

- It's very easy in the Harvard environment without doing any work to get to the position where you can ask intelligent questions about the business.
- You almost have the feeling that the Sloan professor just has no interest at all in knowing what a commercial bank really does.
- With the cases, I certainly knew what the businesses we discussed were all about, what the real concerns and problems were . (Harvard grad)
- At some of the other B-schools, there's a great emphasis put on bringing the business world into the classroom through guest speakers etc.
- The school that comes across the best really for commercial banking is Wharton. Maybe it's because they have a lot of commercial banking courses.
- You could try to make someone particularly attractive to financial institutions in general - have enough supplementary courses that they be familiar with the hot issues.

A number of other attributes are related to the same issues of realism and preparedness, but they are nevertheless distinct from industry orientation.

3. Application Orientation

The distinction between this and some of the other attributes is often unclear. An application orientation is closely related to having a realistic knowledge of the industry, being able to define the problem and see the whole picture, and even to demonstrating management and interpersonal skills. Recruiters feel very strongly that a person must be able to use information and analysis to make and implement a decision.

- ... take the information, analyze it to a point where it means something, where it has application.
- What are we doing this for ? What does it teach us ? Are we able to manage better as a result of it ?
- Any student is soon contributing information, but decisions take about two years.

Application orientation is juxtaposed against theory and analytical skills. They are seen as mutually exclusive and, since Sloan is perceived to concentrate on the latter abilities, our graduates are seen as lacking the former.

- Sloan people have very strong analytical skills and a weakness relative to some of the other schools in terms of placing that analysis in the context of business decisions.
- As valuable as the high-tech orientation might be, as valuable as the deep theoretical knowledge is, what's required [at Sloan] is a need to enlarge the exposure to what I would call the real world - more application

oriented situations.

- Sloan people seem to be less application oriented, more theoretical development.
- Sloan grads are strong in the financial analysis areas, quantitative analysis of marketing or market research, but if you're looking for someone to do product management, the Sloan person is not the individual.

Few people support the notion that technique is more important than application. On the contrary, most give more weight to the ability to make the decisions rather than merely support the decision process.

- Theory is useful in a general way but you won't see them frequently, if at all, applying it.
- Management knows about statistical techniques and management science techniques. What's missing is how to make these tools an integral part of top management decision-making.

Use of the case method is seen as a useful means for developing this sensitivity.

- If you established a policy that each course must have at least three cases so that there is a very overt relationship between the tool and getting the management decision made ...
- At Harvard the education is very practical.
- [Harvard people have] street savvy. They understand where the levers are, how far to push, when to push, what to push ... the case method tends to take advantage of the diverse backgrounds that the 60 people have.

Few recruiters know about the thesis requirement at Sloan, but they assume automatically that it is theoretical in nature. Organizations value real-world research more than theoretical studies.

- ... a thesis that's particularly interesting and probably something which is more practically oriented can be interesting to us.
- It must contribute to real-world experiences.
- ... unless that research is associated with some real on-line kind of experience that is similar to what you would encounter in a business environment, it may actually hurt the individual and attach an academic label on that person.

An application orientation may be encouraged in other ways also.

- ... get professional people in the classroom and let them teach.
- ... guest speakers ...
- ... more consulting projects with outside organizations ...
- Have you pushed or explored more sharing of courses and faculties with Harvard?

4. Problem Definition

Recruiters, and notably those from consulting firms, place a heavy emphasis on the ability to define a problem and ask the right question. An activity is implicitly divided up into

problem definition, solution approach, analysis, recommendations, implementation and presentation. One consultant expressed it as follows :

- In strategy, there are some critical functions that have to be performed to deliver a good product to a client. At the front end, there's the conceptual skills - defining what the problem is, what are the key questions, what are the key objectives, what are the issues that are really important. And then there are a series of steps that say what kind of analysis do I have to do, then collecting data and doing the analysis, and then there's the presentation.

The importance associated with this attribute depends on the industry and functional area. High-tech and investment banking people never mentioned it while the consultants spent considerable time discussing it.

- In strategy, in terms of value added, 80% is defining the problem and 20% is doing the analysis.
- Most important is just getting in there and deciding just what the hell you're trying to deal with.
- One of the things that's most important for a person to be successful in consulting is some ability to make your own way in the presence of an unstructured chaotic environment.

Sloan does not compare favorably on this attribute. Recruiters perceive our emphasis to be on problem solution rather than problem definition. Our students are thought to be skillful at operating with a structured problem, but poor at imposing the needed structure on a complex situation.

- There is little or no question that the Sloan grad can find the answer, but does he have the ability to identify whether it was the right question he just answered ?
- ... give a Sloan student a structured problem and he's off and running.

Recruiters assert that using the case method develops this ability, but that student background and faculty philosophy are also important factors.

- ... it may be the lack of conceptual skills which are not stressed here.
- ... it could be the highly technical nature of many of your students' undergraduate training.
- The faculty at Harvard tends to have more contact with line managers so that they know the significant questions, whereas at Sloan it tends to be more focused on what is the right technique to use, so the whole focus of the case is different.

5. General Manager Perspective

An attribute often cited, particularly by people from high-tech companies, is the importance of viewing a task in a broader context. This "Executive Point of View" (EPV), while linked to such attributes as aggressiveness and breadth, refers more to an outlook - it is important to see a project in terms of the interrelationships with the rest of the organization and especially in terms of a cost-benefit

relation.

- ... the ability to see the totality of the relationship as opposed to the narrow task which you happen to be working on.
- The overview, the general manager perspective is certainly important.
- ... the ability to think about the whole business and tie that to cost-benefit.
- ... the big picture ... (said in chorus)

Recruiters believe that Sloan graduates do not compare favorably with students of other schools on this attribute.

- There's much more EPV [at Harvard] - it's a subliminal thing.
- Sloan grads don't tend by nature to be as interested in the industry, the competition and the interrelations of the various functions.
- Give the students here a touch of the EPV.

6. Breadth (of Class ; of Individuals)

Recruiters see two aspects to breadth. One is the notion that an MBA class should be composed of people with very different backgrounds and the other is that each individual should have a broad background in terms of training and experience. A business undergraduate degree followed by an MBA is not highly valued for this reason. A broad base, in both senses, is considered very important for success in business.

- In business your skill is not being excellent at something but being better than average at a whole wide range of things.
- Our experience is that you can teach the techniques if they have the other characteristics like intellectual breadth and curiosity, but you can't do the inverse.
- ... the skill mix on the person's resume ...
- The student mix is critical.

There is some feeling that the small size of the Sloan class and the higher percentage of students with technical backgrounds tend to work against developing breadth. On the other hand, recruiters do not suggest that our graduates themselves have narrower backgrounds than graduates of other schools.

- We've been a little disappointed over the years that we have not seen as much breadth to the class ...
- Aren't we really looking for balance [in an individual] ? You should see a bias towards accounting and finance but it shouldn't be an imbalance. Sloan is not bad at providing that balance.

To insure breadth, participants suggested :

- [Look for people with] broad backgrounds - activities and interests.
- Have people from major organizations speaking about issues other than high-tech markets.
- ... the case method tends to take advantage of the very diverse backgrounds ...

Interestingly, no one suggested that Sloan change the mix of students from technical to non-technical or vice-versa.

7. Maturity and Years of Experience

Age and experience are generally seen as an advantage and differences are perceived across schools and especially across individual groups at a school. For example, Stanford and Harvard are known to have an average experience level higher than that of Sloan, but the difference is not perceived as being as marked as the difference between our SMP and AMP students.

- Stanford requires three years professional experience to get in and Harvard is moving there now.
- Harvard people tend to have at least three or four years experience.
- Our experience at Chicago shows that they are much younger [than Sloan students] and have less maturity, so Sloan has an advantage.
- One year people are more mature and really come closer to being able to fit in. The gap between these two groups is far more drastic than it is between Sloan and any other school.

Not all companies value experience, however. Some explicitly look to hire people who do not have preconceived ideas. Still others see experience as an advantage, but in moderation.

- You can go too far with the maturity aspect because then they don't want the entry level spots that you're offering.

8. Aggressiveness

Recruiters feel that, although they are hiring someone for an entry level position, they are also potentially hiring a future company president. They look for indications that the person has the drive to reach the top and some of the talents needed to do it. "Aggressiveness" is therefore used here as a synonym for confidence, drive and leadership potential.

These characteristics are to a large extent associated with graduates from all the leading business schools.

- ... top-tier schools are more aggressive and more focused. They basically interview us.

However, Sloan graduates are perceived to be far less aggressive than MBA's from other schools, notably Harvard. Recruiters believe Sloan students are less interested in being top managers. This phenomenon is not because of any aspect of the program but rather as a result of students selecting a school which they perceive to be a better match with their personalities.

- [Sloan students] don't seem to have that same level of aggressiveness which appears in greater measures in some of the other schools.
- Maybe this is the place for our people in manufacturing and R&D to be going to look for grads, but not for our people in marketing which generally leads to the general management area.
- ... you want to make sure that the Harvard student has intellectual firepower whereas at Sloan you make sure that the person has the kind of drive or need to take control that Harvard students tend to have.
- People who have gone to other B-schools are all candidates, in their own minds at least, for general management.
- The Harvard students in general have more of a leadership instinct. They go to Harvard because they have that instinct.

Aggressiveness is not always a valued quality, particularly when it takes the form of arrogance and an over-assessment of self-worth.

- The only required course Harvard seems to have is arrogance.
- The people at Harvard in my experience don't have a realistic assessment of what their value is to the company.
- [Sloan students may not be as aggressive but] on the positive side, they generally have a pretty positive attitude, more cooperative.
- The Harvard guy wants to run the company on the second day ...

--- and that's the slow ones !

9. Entrepreneurial Spirit

An individual with an entrepreneurial background is generally seen as more attractive to a company. This factor was mentioned by all the groups except, somewhat surprisingly, high-tech. Some see it as only one aspect which can distinguish a candidate, but not as a requirement. Recruiters disagree over whether Harvard or Sloan produces more entrepreneurs. Some feel that there are more entrepreneurial opportunities at some other schools, for example in the form of on-campus concessions, but that the high-tech orientation of many Sloan graduates lends itself to subsequent entrepreneurial activities.

- If the person's done something entrepreneurial, if the person's started something, that's really important to us.
 - There might be an opportunity here to serve the institute generally and provide entrepreneurial experience for the students at Sloan.
 - Princeton undergrads get a lot of entrepreneurial experience running concessions.
 - You'd find more entrepreneurs come out of Harvard.
- We think you'd find more here at Sloan.

10. Interpersonal Skills

Recruiters agree that it is critical not only to be able to get along with people, but more particularly to be able to secure their cooperation, all in a politically complex organization. People with theoretical and technical backgrounds are implicitly thought to be lacking in interpersonal skills, and therein lies perhaps the best example of where technical abilities and other attributes are viewed as generally mutually exclusive.

- The engineering background people are the ones that don't see the importance of interpersonal skills.
- The real important thing is how well you can size up a political situation, how well you perceive an opportunity, how well you present your case, whether you can get resources - much more interpersonal than it is skill specific.
- ... and who are you selling your ideas to? You have to understand where the person is coming from, what are his constituencies, what do they need.
- ... success or failure would be less dependent on that person's ability to scope out the size of the project and organize how to approach it and more significance on how that person was going to influence people that had to contribute. I'm not sure that happens in a library.

Partly as a result of the high percentage of people with technical backgrounds, Sloan graduates are perceived as being particularly weak in this area. Often the perception is based on bad experiences in the past. While recruiters at Sloan usually just assume technical and analytical skills, they are

very careful to try assess a candidate's interpersonal skills.

- When you come here, you know that people think well. What you're looking for is a person who is well socialized.
- We've probably also had the highest proportion [from Sloan] who have left because of personality problems.
- The ability to deal one-on-one is important. You've got people who are not flexible in a variety of one-on-one situations.
- ... to come up with an implementation which takes into account the personalities of the people who have to be convinced. Its that kind of thing that Sloan people tend to have a problem with.

Participants did not offer any solutions to the problem, although the case method is seen as helpful as long as people are forced to participate.

- Unless you have very active interpersonal discussions between the people in the class, then you might as well have a chalk-talk.

11. Communication Skills

The ability to communicate effectively is universally considered to be absolutely critical. MBA students in general are thought to be weak in this area, particularly with regard to writing skills.

- Business writing is probably the single most absent skill we see across the board.
- Writing skills are one critical thing that we find lacking in all B-grads. If you could get your students able to do that better than other students, you'd have a real distinguishing advantage.

Oral communication skills are somewhat tied to interpersonal skills, which have been discussed, but nevertheless deserve separate mention here. Despite the fact that an interviewer is better able to assess verbal skills than writing ability, many report disappointing experiences, especially with Sloan graduates. The case method is widely praised as a means of developing these skills, but only if class participation is not entirely voluntary.

- The biggest single difference that I see as a result of this case thing is the Sloan people ... getting in front of a team of senior managers to lay out a problem or solution don't do it with anywhere near the same degree of poise and self-confidence.
- Presentation skills - get it refined and defined to a point that you can present it - an ingredient in that is competing for airtime.
- My sense is that the Sloan people demonstrate less well than the Harvard people an ability to communicate what they're trying to do to a businessman who may not understand the technical terms. That's definitely in large part a product of the cases.

Participants responded very favorably to moderators' comments on the various communication courses and programs which Sloan is implementing.

12. Management Skills

Some consultants felt strongly that management skills is an area where the training at all business schools is inadequate. To some extent these skills intersect with interpersonal skills, but are distinct in the sense that they deal with relationships with subordinates and also include other activities which are specific to managers.

- A manager has to do with how to recruit people, how do you motivate them, how do you fire them when you have to, how you give them guidance and feedback, how to arrange a compensation package for them, how to direct people.
- How do you have patience ? How do you relate to people who have no necessary coincidence of interest and get them to do what you want them to do ? Budgeting. Profit plans. Assess priorities.
- The whole focus of schools on teaching analysis makes the graduate schools of management trade schools for consulting.

13. Grades

Recruiters obviously cannot compare grades across schools, but many certainly consider them an important indicator of future success when comparing graduates within a school. Discussion of the attitudes towards grades is important for the purposes of this report since academic accomplishments and GMAT scores are criteria used in Sloan's admissions process.

Recruiters split into three groups with respect to the importance they attach to grades. Moreover, each industry group split into three as well, with the exception of the consultants who generally tend to place a stronger emphasis than do other companies.

Some believe that students, by virtue of the fact that they are at a top business school, have already demonstrated an acceptable level of academic performance. Furthermore, the extent by which a student exceeds this threshold level is no indication of future success.

- ... if you're talking to one of the top schools, you just assume that you've gone through the selection process.
- I trust the school and the interests of the candidate.
- ... it doesn't play a big factor.
- Academic success in the MBA program is in no way associated with success at [company].

Others believe that grades should be looked at, and then only under special circumstances, and viewed as only one indication of a candidate's suitability.

- We look every now and then.
- ... not as a discriminating device, but just to alert us to somebody who may have had problems with accounting or finance.
- Grades would be important to us, but less important than the skill mix that's on the person's resume.

- A person has to have something which distinguishes them - grades can be one of those things.
- Its only one part of what you look at, but you certainly don't neglect it.

The third group places a lot of emphasis on grades, but finds it difficult in some cases to identify top students, an issue which will be explored further when placement process is discussed.

- We have a policy of taking the top 25% from selected schools.
- We would love to get a class ranking (chanted in unison by consultant group)

14. Placement Process

No discussion centered around whether companies are satisfied with Sloan's placement process itself aside from the consultant group who voiced concerns over the problem of identifying top students.

- A firm wants to know who the best students are. Sloan works hard to hide that fact. Harvard and some other schools work to help you find out who they are.
- Chicago is a real hardcore free market - they love to help you draw the distinction between who the good guys are and who the bad guys are. You can go up there and do business.
- Most faculty members, except at Chicago, are reluctant [to indicate the best students].

One other aspect was mentioned, namely that it is relatively more expensive to recruit at Sloan than at Harvard because of the small number of students.

- The key thing about Harvard is that its a big pool of people with a consistent set of rules. Sloan, while in the same locale, has a different set of rules, one-eighth the people, but the resources are not proportionately smaller that you have to devote to understanding the ropes and who's really good.

C. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The attributes which recruiters see as important when evaluating business schools and their graduates can be divided into four types :

a) Technical abilities and analytical skills form a group on their own. They are a function of both a student's pre-business school training as well as graduate course work.

b) Ability to contribute in a real-world business environment. This group includes such attributes as career direction, industry and company knowledge, an application orientation, conceptual abilities and a general manager perspective. Recruiters see the type of experience which a student gets at business school as being the major contributing factor in this area.

c) Personality and background characteristics such as breadth, maturity, aggressiveness and entrepreneurial instincts. To a large extent, these attributes are part of a person's makeup which are not significantly changed at graduate school.

d) Interpersonal skills and the ability to communicate and manage effectively. Recruiters see a candidate's business school training as crucial in developing these attributes.

In general, participants felt that Sloan graduates are very strong in technical abilities, but weak relative to most other business schools in all the other areas. It would be premature at this stage of the study to speculate on the extent to which recruiters in general value the various attributes. However, it is clear from the analysis of the four focus group interviews that representatives of various industries or functions differ considerably in their weightings. Recruiters perceive each school's graduates to have strengths which equip them better for certain positions relative to graduates of other schools.

Companies are primarily concerned with the product they see - business school graduates - rather than being preoccupied with the business schools themselves. In addition, not all attributes on which candidates are evaluated are a function of their business school training. For these reasons, the attributes of schools, such as teaching methods, program

structure and faculty orientation, have not been discussed separately but rather mentioned where appropriate in the discussion of attributes of graduates.

Another way of classifying the attributes is therefore according to the influence of the program itself :

a) Attributes which are significantly influenced by the characteristics of the MBA program such as teaching method, extracurricular opportunities and class diversity.

b) Attributes which are mainly a function of the candidate's personality, academic background and work experience.

Attributes in the second group are also to a large extent influenced by a school's program, albeit indirectly, in two ways. Firstly, there is considerable self-selection by applicants who themselves have criteria by which they judge the various schools. The positioning of a school therefore has a profound influence on the type of applicant the program attracts. Secondly, the admissions criteria used determine, from this pool of applicants, the ultimate student mix, and therefore form an integral part of a business school's overall strategy.

In summary then, recruiters see a range of attributes of candidates as being important to industry's needs. The graduates of various schools are perceived to differ on each attribute ; candidates from one school would therefore be seen as generally more attractive for a particular position than graduates from another. A business school can significantly influence recruiters' perceptions of its graduates' abilities, but the strategy has to be long-term and comprehensive, taking into account all constituencies.

APPROPRIATE FOR :

- manufacturing
- marketing
- R & D
- high-tech
- market-research
- commercial banking
- finance
- accounting
- MIS
- technical
- product management
- consulting

TECHNICAL ABILITIES :

- theoretical knowledge
- technical orientation
- reasoning
- technical training
- structured in their thinking
- can organize information
- statistical techniques
- academic
- management science techniques
- knowledge of finance/accounting
- analytical abilities
- quantitative skills
- problem solving
- researcher
- technical orientation
- crunch numbers
- smart
- good insights
- can sum it all up

CAREER DIRECTION ; KNOWLEDGE OF THE INDUSTRY AND COMPANY :

- focused on what they want to do
- trends and interrelationships
- real concerns and problems
- differences between companies
- what industry and what specialty
- hot issues in the industry
- what's involved in the profession
- commitment to exploring career

APPLICATION ORIENTATION :

- apply the analysis
- know where the levers are
- real-world situation exposure
- practical orientation
- street-savvy
- know what the analysis teaches
- tool-decision relationship
- can make decisions, not just support decision-making
- analyze information until it means something
- apply it to manage better

PROBLEM DEFINITION SKILLS :

- ask the right questions
- dealing with complexities
- defining key objectives
- conceptual skills
- defining key issues
- work with an unstructured problem

TABLE 3.1(a) : EVOKED ATTRIBUTES OF GRADUATES

GENERAL MANAGER PERSPECTIVE :

- executive point of view (EPV)
- tie in to cost-benefit
- see the big picture
- the overview
- more than your narrow task
- aspires to general management
- see the whole picture
- totality of the relationship
- think about the whole business
- interrelationships with rest of organization

BREADTH (OF CLASS ; OF INDIVIDUALS) :

- student mix
- general knowledge
- generalist
- curiosity
- better than average at a range of things
- balance
- skill mix on a resume
- intellectual reach
- broad activities and interests
- learn from people with diverse backgrounds

MATURITY :

- experience
- age
- years of professional experience
- real on-line experience
- preconceived ideas

AGGRESSIVENESS :

- confidence
- enthusiasm
- arrogance
- leadership instinct
- drive
- realistic assessment of own worth
- candidate for general mgt.
- initiative
- cooperative attitude
- presence
- need to take control
- wants to run business on second day

ENTREPRENEURIAL INSTINCTS :

- initiative
- creative
- entrepreneurial background
- has started something

INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

- able to fit in
- influence people
- gain resources
- sell & develop business
- flexible in a variety of one-on-one situations
- interpersonal flexibility
- size up a political situation
- well socialized
- understand another person and their constituencies

TABLE 3.1(a) : EVOKED ATTRIBUTES OF GRADUATES

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

- literate
- oral presentation skills
- articulate
- think on your feet
- use charts and numbers
- writing skills
- poise
- compete for air-time
- communicate with a client

MANAGEMENT SKILLS

- knows how to recruit
- fire
- give feedback
- direct people
- profit plans
- cooperation from subordinates
- motivate
- give guidance
- arrange compensation
- budgeting
- assess priorities

MISCELLANEOUS :

- grades
- service ethic
- geographical flexibility
- up on the latest politico-economic thrust

TABLE 3.1(a) : EVOKED ATTRIBUTES OF GRADUATES

TEACHING METHODS :

- practical
- case method
- theoretical emphasis
- teach EPV
- bring business into the classroom
- rigorous nature of coursework
- emphasize conceiving the problem
- teach the right way to do it
- teach how business does it
- techniques
- teach management skills
- guest speakers in class
- class participation pressure

FACULTY :

- academic excellence
- professional people
- knowledge of industry
- exposure to real world
- contact with line management

PROGRAM :

- diversity of class
- humane environment
- extracurricular opportunities
- average experience of students
- location
- scientific environment
- expensive to recruit there
- thesis is academic, applied, ...
- step to a Ph.D.
- size of class
- active club programs
- average age of students
- percentage students with technical backgrounds
- alumni base
- can identify top students
- emphasis on banking, high-tech, MIS, accounting, finance, ...

TABLE 3.1(b) : EVOKED ATTRIBUTES OF SCHOOLS

CHAPTER 4 : SURVEY ANALYSIS

In Chapter 2, the methodology used in administering and analyzing the questionnaires was discussed. The questionnaire itself was described in terms of four sections - ratings, rankings, personal information, and free-form comments. A similar breakdown is used in this analysis section. Four areas are discussed - perceptions, preference, other tabulated data and, finally, respondents' criticisms, suggestions and comments.

A. PERCEPTIONS

The measures of perception used in this analysis are based on the 20 attributes in the questionnaire, and then later on the dimensions identified through factor analysis. The discussions focus on a number of graphical rather than tabular representations since these are more useful for gaining a comprehensive picture.

1. Perceptions along the Attributes

a. Average Ratings for Sloan and for all Schools :

Figure 4.1 is a useful summary illustration in that it shows not only how schools and their graduates in general perform on each attribute, but also how Sloan is perceived relative to

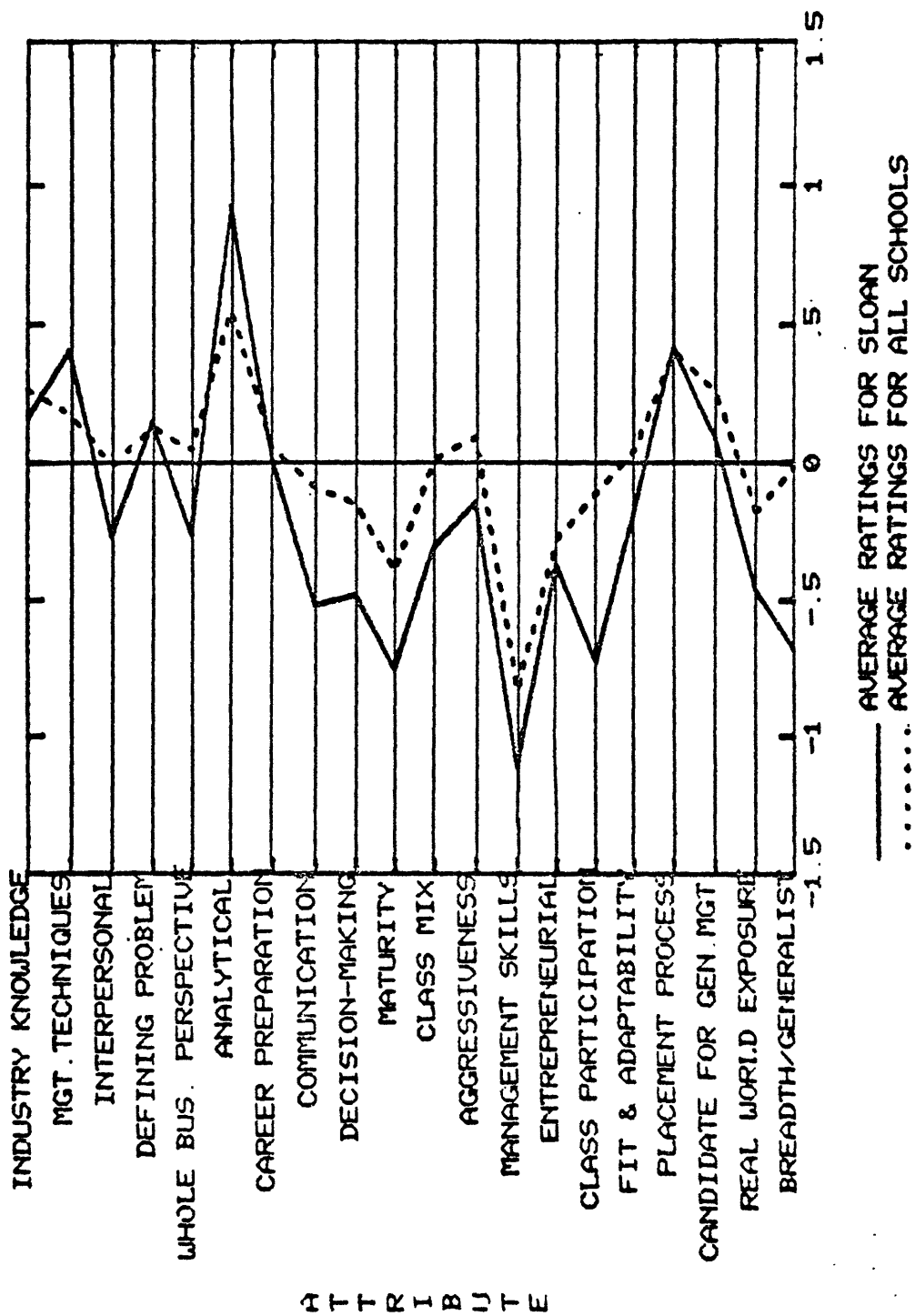


FIGURE 4.1 AVERAGE STANDARDIZED RATINGS FOR SLOAN AND ALL SCHOOLS

the other schools. Several comments are worth making which apply to all subsequent plots as well. Firstly, the attribute descriptions on the left side are abbreviated forms of the original attribute statements on the questionnaires. While these are as descriptive as possible, familiarity with the original statements is essential for accurate interpretation. The reader is referred to the questionnaire reproduced in Appendix A. As mentioned earlier, ratings on negatively stated attributes were reversed so that all attributes should be interpreted as being positive or desirable. Secondly, the ratings have been standardized for each individual. Different points on the plots represent average ratings, but not all are statistically significant. For example, while the mean rating for Sloan is lower than the mean rating for all schools on "maturity", the difference may or may not be statistically significant depending on the number of observations and standard deviation of each sample. In this particular example, it turns out that the difference is significant at the 99% level. However, there are so many comparisons which can be made from the various plots that no attempt has been made to provide information on statistical significance.

From Figure 4.1, it can be seen that schools in general are rated particularly highly on company & industry knowledge, analytical skills, and providing hospitable placement environments, but poorly on maturity/experience, entrepreneurial instincts, decision-making abilities, and

especially management skills. These results correspond very closely with the criticisms traditionally leveled at MBA's, many of which were identified in Chapter 1, as well as with the comments made by the focus group participants. However, some ratings are a little surprising. Communication skills, fit & adaptability, and interpersonal skills are not rated as low as one might expect, given the preceding qualitative analyses of the media statements and the focus groups. On the other hand, one might expect the ratings on class diversity and aggressiveness to be higher. The explanation for this may lie in the fact that recruiters feel that schools differ greatly on any given attribute, so that ratings across all schools tend to be less extreme. Subsequent analysis will show the ratings for each school individually.

The plot very clearly shows that Sloan is rated much lower than the overall average on all attributes other than analytical skills and management techniques, which are higher, and problem definition skills, career preparation, entrepreneurial instincts, and placement process, which are average. Note that the all-schools plot includes ratings of Sloan so that the "distances" between Sloan and all other schools are in fact greater than they appear to be.

The general feeling is that Sloan graduates are analytically superior but narrow in focus and experience, lacking in management, interpersonal, and communications skills, and

having little real-world experience. Again, the quantitative analysis of the perceptions is remarkably close to the qualitative information obtained from the focus group interviews. One noticeable difference between the results of the two analyses, however, is that Sloan's company & industry knowledge and general career preparedness are not rated as low the focus groups indicated. However, it should be remembered that the commercial and investment bank participants were the only groups to express these concerns - later analysis will show that these two groups did indeed rate Sloan lower on these attributes than did respondents from other industries.

b. Average Ratings for each School :

Figures 4.2(a) - (c) show the average ratings for each of the 10 schools. Sloan is plotted with three other schools on each plot. To facilitate comparison of schools not on the same plot, Table 4.1 gives the actual average standardized ratings for all schools and all attributes.

Analysis of the plots is unfortunately complex. The factor analysis discussed in subsequent sections will simplify it considerably. For the moment, therefore, it is worthwhile noting highlights and making some comments which are related only to the individual attributes, leaving discussion of the overall positioning of each school for the more aggregate factor analysis results.

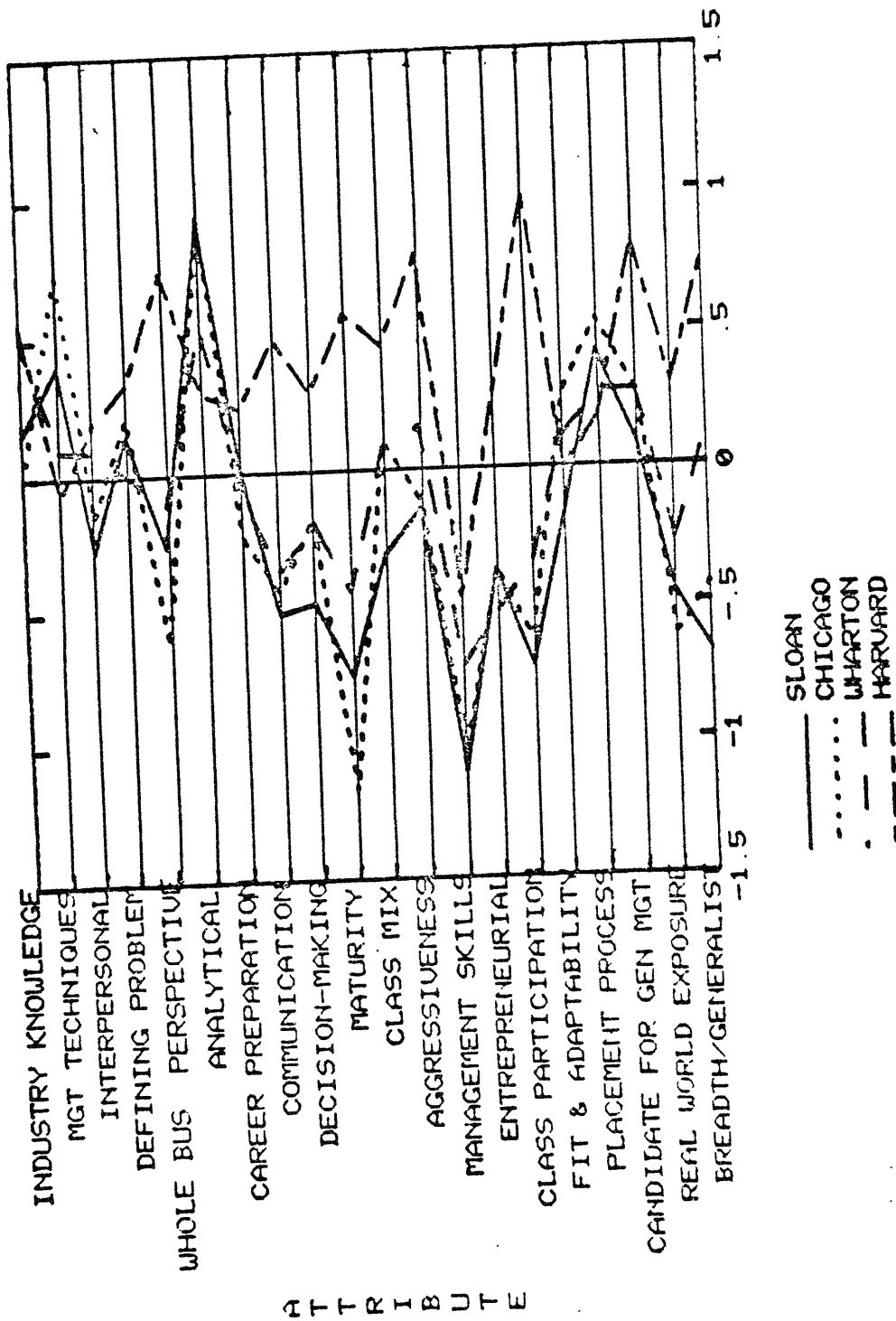


FIGURE 4 2(a) : AVERAGE STANDARDIZED RATINGS

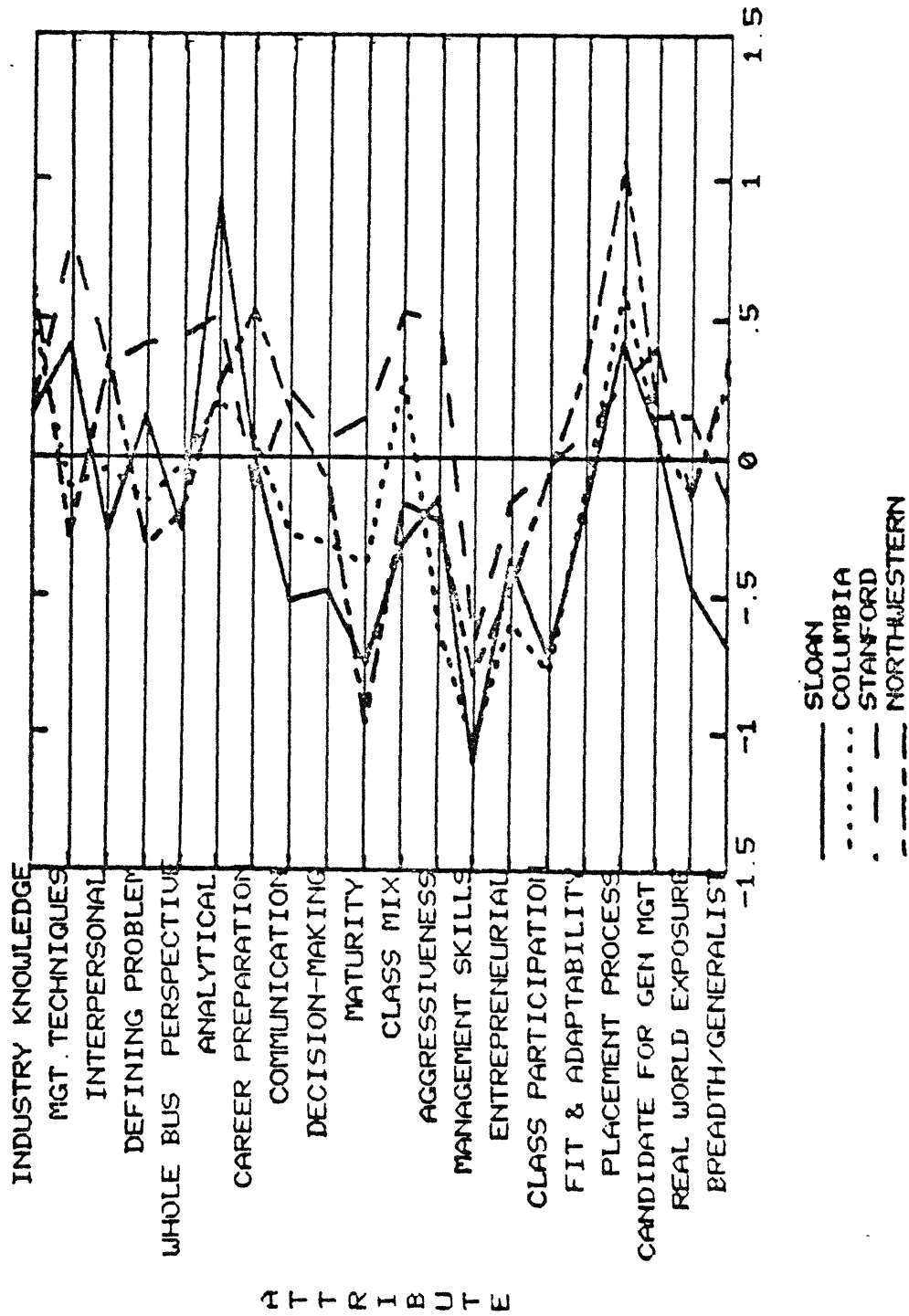


FIGURE 4.2(b) · AVERAGE STANDARDIZED RATINGS

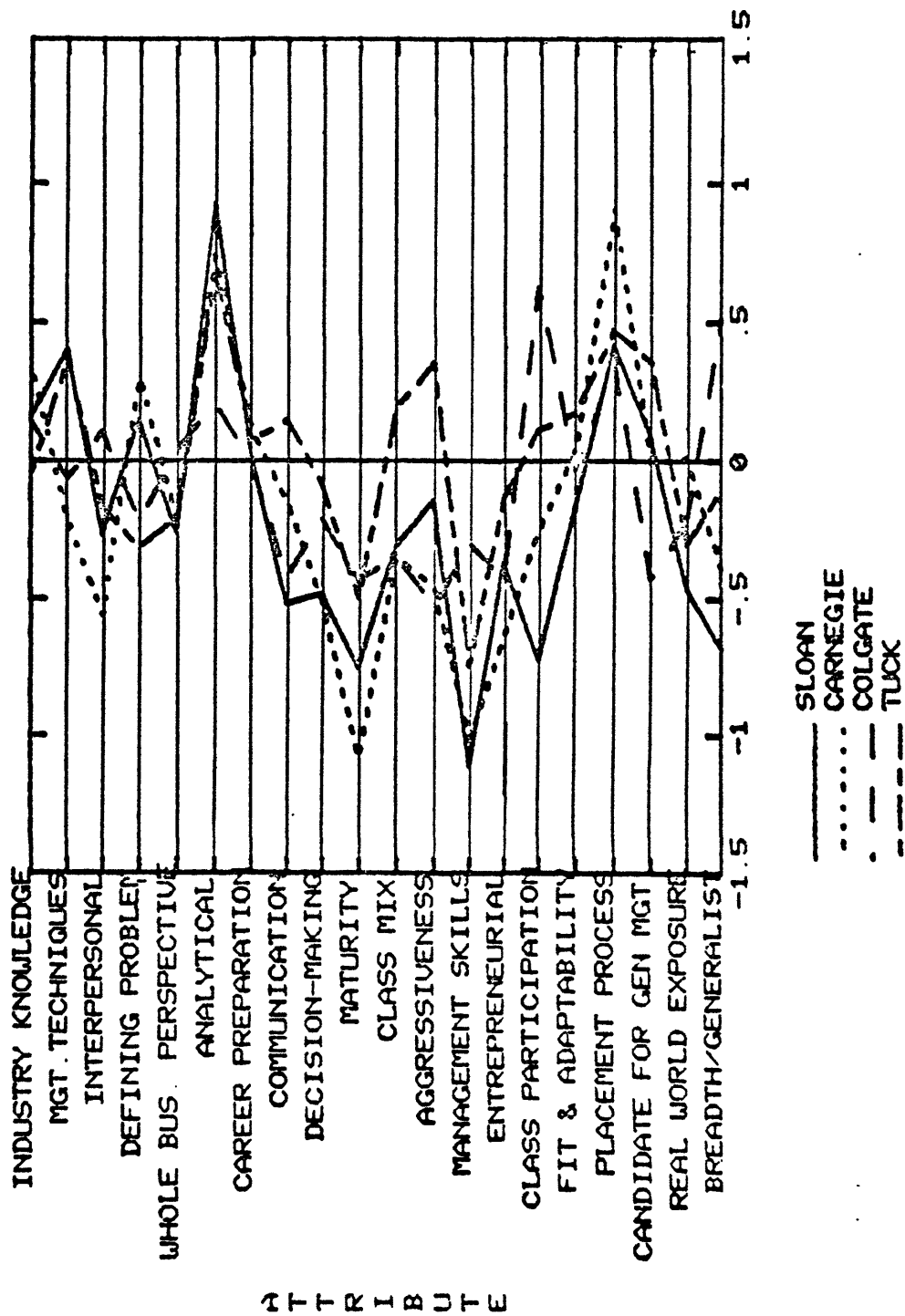


FIGURE 4.2(c) · AVERAGE STANDARDIZED RATINGS

	CO. & IND. KNOWLEDGE	MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES	INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	DEFINING PROBLEM	WHOLE BUS. PERSPECTIVE
SLOAN	.161	.401	-.268	.148	-.262
HARVARD	.546	-.064	.188	.328	.738
COLGATE	.145	-.063	.106	-.221	.046
STANFORD	.186	.784	.333	.406	.433
WHARTON	.501	.098	.092	.005	-.112
NORTHWESTERN	.61	-.288	.355	-.326	-.197
COLUMBIA	.476	-.109	-.039	-.162	-.025
TUCK	-.043	.369	-.168	-.313	-.203
CHICAGO	.028	.742	-.146	.217	-.617
CARNEGIE	.336	-.207	-.56	.302	-.213
OTHER1	-.15	.045	-.028	.011	-.113
OTHER2	-.031	-.307	.295	.393	.083

	ANALYTICAL SKILLS	CAREER PREPAREDNESS	COMMUNICATION SKILLS	DECISION- MAKING	MATURITY & EXPERIENCE
SLOAN	.924	.016	-.52	-.481	-.757
HARVARD	.293	.237	.486	.285	.571
COLGATE	.21	-.011	-.427	-.205	-.437
STANFORD	.515	-.114	.236	.068	.15
WHARTON	.54	-.07	-.365	-.19	-.442
NORTHWESTERN	.254	.53	.151	-.088	-.964
COLUMBIA	.212	.076	-.28	-.304	-.391
TUCK	.671	.076	.147	-.083	-.496
CHICAGO	.934	-.226	-.436	-.165	-1.173
CARNEGIE	.74	.113	-.143	-.51	-1.084
OTHER1	.411	.004	-.101	-.228	-.883
OTHER2	.242	-.14	.323	-.127	-.634

TABLE 4.1 : AVERAGE STANDARDIZED SCORES FOR ALL SCHOOLS

	CLASS DIVERSITY	AGGRESSIVENESS	MANAGEMENT SKILLS	ENTREPRE- NEURIAL	CLASS PARTICIPATION
SLOAN	-.311	-.143	-1.112	-.373	-.726
HARVARD	.454	.776	-.465	.254	1.005
COLGATE	-.342	-.534	-.298	-.427	.627
STANFORD	.524	.497	-.672	-.16	-.021
WHARTON	.078	.158	-.726	-.523	-.351
NORTHWESTERN	-.161	-.225	-.787	-.466	-.058
COLUMBIA	.295	-.607	-1.045	-.59	-.781
TUCK	.196	.351	-.745	-.14	.11
CHICAGO	.106	-.112	-1.032	-.367	-.625
CARNEGIE	-.349	-.455	-1.013	-.639	-.256
OTHER1	-.321	-.263	-.947	-.727	-.394
OTHER2	-.713	-.129	-1.224	-.097	-.249

	FIT & ADAPTABILITY	PLACEMENT PROCESS	CANDIDATE FOR GEN.MGT.	REAL WORLD EXPOSURE	BREADTH/ GENERALIST
SLOAN	-.175	.414	.086	-.464	-.681
HARVARD	-.011	.176	.814	.292	.762
COLGATE	-.032	.359	-.424	-.219	.515
STANFORD	.098	.272	.4	-.145	.356
WHARTON	.112	.274	.271	-.272	.132
NORTHWESTERN	.353	1.067	.152	.152	-.153
COLUMBIA	-.092	.614	.074	-.12	.291
TUCK	.17	.473	.358	-.307	-.097
CHICAGO	.262	.534	.278	-.621	-.431
CARNEGIE	.039	.908	-.006	.012	-.39
OTHER1	.321	.475	-.082	-.228	-.2
OTHER2	.528	.454	-.44	-.398	-.127

TABLE 4.1 : AVERAGE STANDARDIZED SCORES FOR ALL SCHOOLS

(i) Company & Industry Knowledge

Mean - -0.26

Variability - Very little among the various schools

High - Harvard, Wharton, Northwestern & Columbia

Low - Tuck & Chicago

S.R.P. - 7th out of 10 (Sloan's Relative Position)

Comments - Wharton was identified in the focus group interviews as being excellent on this attribute, particularly in the financial area.

(ii) Management Techniques :

Mean - 0.18

Variability - Ratings range from -0.31 (Northwestern) to 0.78 (Stanford)

High - Stanford & Chicago, followed by Sloan and Tuck

Low - Northwestern, Carnegie, Columbia

S.R.P. - 3rd

Comments - There is some ambiguity in the attribute statement : it could be interpreted as people management techniques or analytical techniques. The high correlation with "analytical abilities" indicates that most respondents interpreted the statement in the analytical sense.

(iii) Interpersonal Skills :

Mean - -0.01

Variability - Relatively little ; range is from -0.56 to 0.35

High - Northwestern and Stanford, followed by Harvard

Low - Carnegie & Sloan
 S.R.P. - 9th

(iv) Problem Definition Skills

Mean - 0.13
 Variability - Low ; range -0.31 to 0.4
 High - Stanford, Harvard & Carnegie
 Low - Northwestern, Tuck, Colgate
 S.R.P. - 6th

(v) Whole Business Perspective :

Mean - 0.05
 Variability - Very high ; range -0.62 to 0.73
 High - Harvard followed by Stanford
 Low - Chicago particularly low followed by
 Sloan and Carnegie
 S.R.P. - 9th

(vi) Analytical Skills :

Mean - 0.56
 Variability - Low ; all schools rated highly; range
 from 0.21 to 0.93
 High - Chicago & Sloan very high followed by
 Carnegie and Tuck
 Low - Columbia, Colgate, Northwestern & Harvard
 S.R.P. - 2nd

(vii) Career Preparedness :

Mean - 0.06
 Variability - Little ; range -0.22 to 0.53

High - Northwestern followed by Harvard
 Low - Chicago & Stanford
 S.R.P. - 6th

(viii) Communication Skills :

Mean - -0.88
 Variability - Relatively high ; range -0.51 to 0.48
 High - Harvard
 Low - Sloan, Colgate, Wharton
 S.R.P. - 10th
 Comments - The statement specified both oral & written skills. Some respondents indicated that they would like to rate each separately. Note that Harvard is perceived to have a distinct competitive advantage in this area.

(ix) Decision-making Abilities :

Mean - -0.15
 Variability - Low except for an outlier (Harvard) ; range -0.51 to 0.28
 High - Harvard
 Low - Carnegie & Sloan
 S.R.P. - 9th
 Comments - Here again, Harvard has a distinct advantage over all other schools.

(x) Maturity and Experience :

Mean - -0.39
 Variability - Extremely high ; range -1.17 to 0.57
 High - Harvard

Low - Chicago, Carnegie, Northwestern & Sloan
 S.R.P. - 7th
 Comment - Again Harvard is way ahead of all other schools.

(xi) Diversity of Class :

Mean - 0.12
 Variability - High ; range -0.34 to 0.52 (excluding school "other" which is -0.71)
 High - Stanford, Harvard & Columbia
 Low - Colgate, Carnegie & Sloan
 S.R.P. - 8th

(xii) Aggressiveness :

Mean - 0.09
 Variability - High ; range -0.61 to 0.77
 High - Harvard followed by Stanford & Tuck
 Low - Columbia, Colgate & Carnegie
 S.R.P. - 6th

(xiii) Management Skills :

Mean - -0.83
 Variability - Very little ; range -1.11 to -0.29
 High - Colgate & Harvard
 Low - Sloan, Colgate, Chicago, Carnegie (all about equal)
 S.R.P. - 10th

(xiv) Entrepreneurial Instincts :

Mean - -0.28

Variability - Relatively little ; range -0.6 to 0.25

High - Harvard

Low - Columbia & Carnegie

S.R.P. - 5th

Comment - Harvard is rated far higher than any other school.

(xv) Class Participation :

Mean - -0.11

Variability - Very large ; range -0.78 to 1.01

High - Harvard & Colgate

Low - Colgate, Sloan, Chicago

S.R.P. - 9th

(xvi) Fit & Adaptability :

Mean - 0.05

Variability - Very little ; range -0.17 to 0.35

High - Northwestern, Chicago

Low - Sloan, Columbia

S.R.P. - 10th

(xvii) Placement Process :

Mean - 0.4

Variability - Low ; range 0.17 to 1.06

High - Northwestern, Carnegie

Low - Harvard, Stanford, Wharton

S.R.P. - 6th

Comments - It is not clear which features of the placement process are important to respondents in rating this attribute. The focus groups indicated that an important

element is being able to get student rankings and Chicago was commended for this. However, Chicago was given an average score of 0.53 versus 0.91 and 2.06 for the schools rated highest. Another feature mentioned in the focus groups was economy (a preference for large student bodies). Again, however, the largest schools such as Harvard and Wharton were rated poorly. Perhaps it is the rules and regulations governing recruiting and the lack of personal attention at these large schools that accounts for the ratings.

(xviii) Candidate for General Management :

Mean - 0.26
 Variability - Average ; range -0.42 to 0.81
 High - Harvard
 Low - Colgate
 S.R.P. - 7th
 Comment - Most schools fall in the range 0 to 0.4.
 Harvard & Colgate are truly extremes.

(xix) Real-world Exposure at School :

Mean - -0.18
 Variability - Relatively high ; range -0.62 to 0.29
 High - Harvard, Northwestern
 Low - Chicago, Sloan
 S.R.P. - 9th

(xx) Breadth/Generalist :

Mean - -0.13
 Variability - Very high ; range -0.68 to 0.76
 High - Harvard, Colgate

Low - Sloan, Chicago & Carnegie
 S.R.P. - 10th

Sloan's competitive position can best be summed up by a table of our relative rankings on each of the 20 attributes. Each position is expressed as before i.e. ranking out of 10 :

Company & Industry Knowledge	7
Management Techniques	3
Interpersonal Skills	9
Problem Definition Skills	6
Whole Business Perspective	9
Analytical Skills	2
Career Preparedness	6
Communication Skills	10
Decision-making Abilities	9
Maturity & Experience	7
Diversity of Class	8
Aggressiveness	6
Management Skills	10
Entrepreneurial Instincts	5
Class Participation	9
Fit & Adaptability	10
Placement Process	6
Candidate for General Management	7
Real-world Exposure	9
Breadth/Generalist	10

c. Average Ratings of Sloan by Respondents who do and do not Recruit at Sloan

It is important to consider the differences in perceptions of Sloan between those who do and those who do not recruit here. The sample of recruiters who rated Sloan is heavily weighted towards those who recruit here, so it is essential to look separately at the non-Sloan recruiter group. Furthermore, all respondents rated Sloan while only those respondents familiar with the schools rated the competing schools. Examining Sloan

versus non-Sloan respondents may give some indication of why they do not visit Sloan. Figure 4.3 illustrates the ratings of Sloan by both groups.

It is apparent that non-Sloan recruiters think less of our graduates on all attributes except career preparedness and class participation. However, the differences are not great, with the exceptions of class mix, fit & adaptability, and placement process. Respondents who do not recruit here consider us even narrower in focus (class mix ; breadth/generalist ; whole business perspective) and weaker at interpersonal skills (including fit & adaptability) than do those who do recruit here. The earlier analysis showed these to be our weakest attributes relative to other schools.

The gap could be one or more of the following :

- self-selection
- "post-purchase" rationalization
- misperception by non-Sloan respondents

It is not possible to identify which one is operative here from the survey. It is clear that if it is a case of misperception, PR is needed.

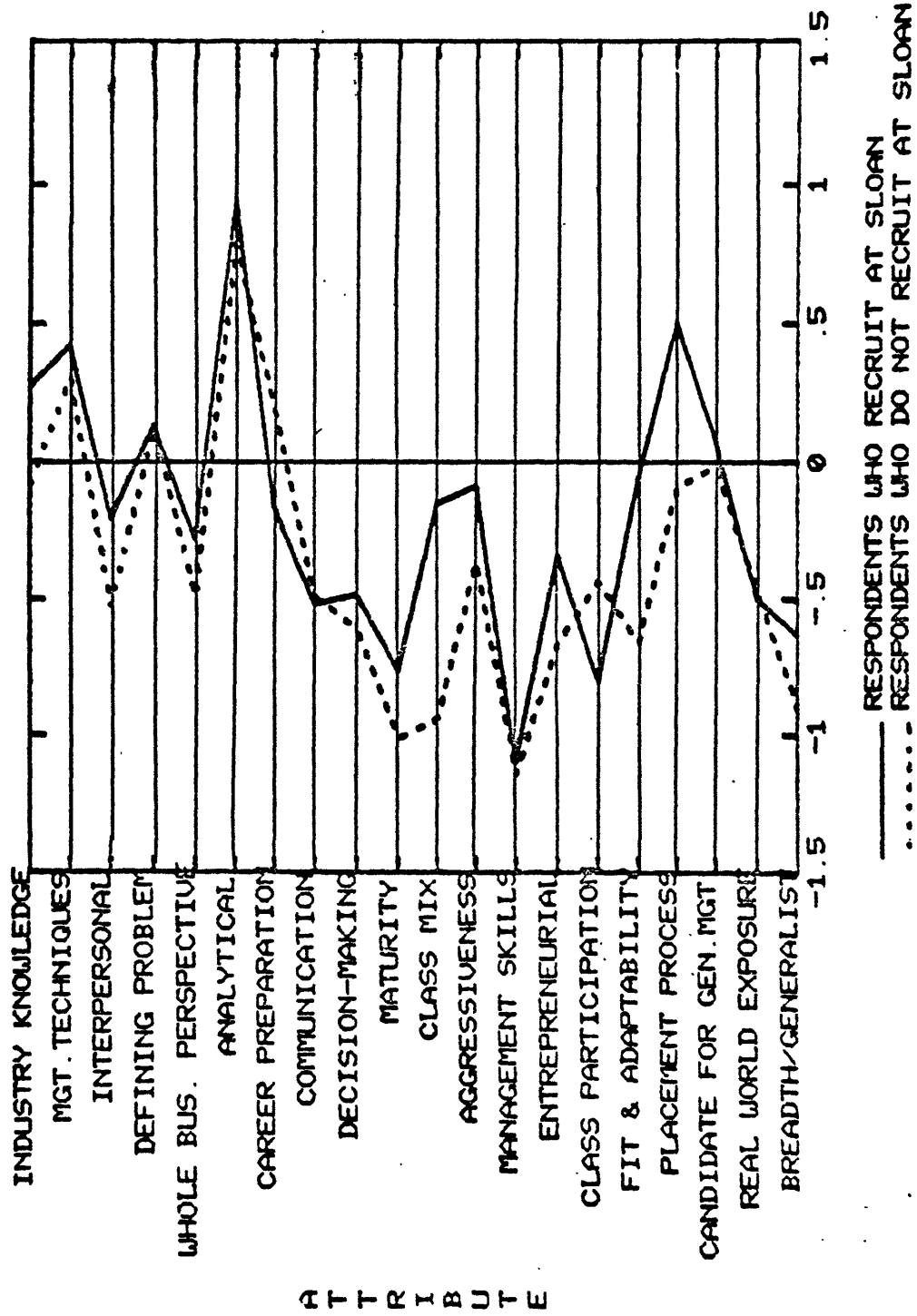


FIGURE 4.3 : AVERAGE STANDARDIZED RATINGS OF SLOAN BY WHERE RESP'S RECRUIT

d. Average Ratings of Sloan by Recruiters, Hirers & Employers

Figure 4.4 illustrates the average ratings given to Sloan by these three groups. In general, the perceptions are similar, although there are a few exceptions. Employers and hirers consider Sloan graduates to be more analytical than do recruiters. This is evident from the ratings on management skills, analytical skills, and problem definition abilities. At the same time, employers and hirers see us as having weaker interpersonal and communication skills than do recruiters. Employers seem to believe that Sloan graduates are more entrepreneurial and more likely to be candidates for general management than do the other two groups.

Despite these differences, it should be emphasized that the samples are small and the differences are not very significant.

e. Sloan Ratings by Respondents who are in Different Functional Areas

Figure 4.5 plots ratings of Sloan by respondents involved in marketing, finance and consulting (other areas are too poorly represented to be included). In general, the ratings given by each group are fairly consistent. As in the previous section, the small samples make it difficult to identify statistically significant differences. Nevertheless, some patterns are

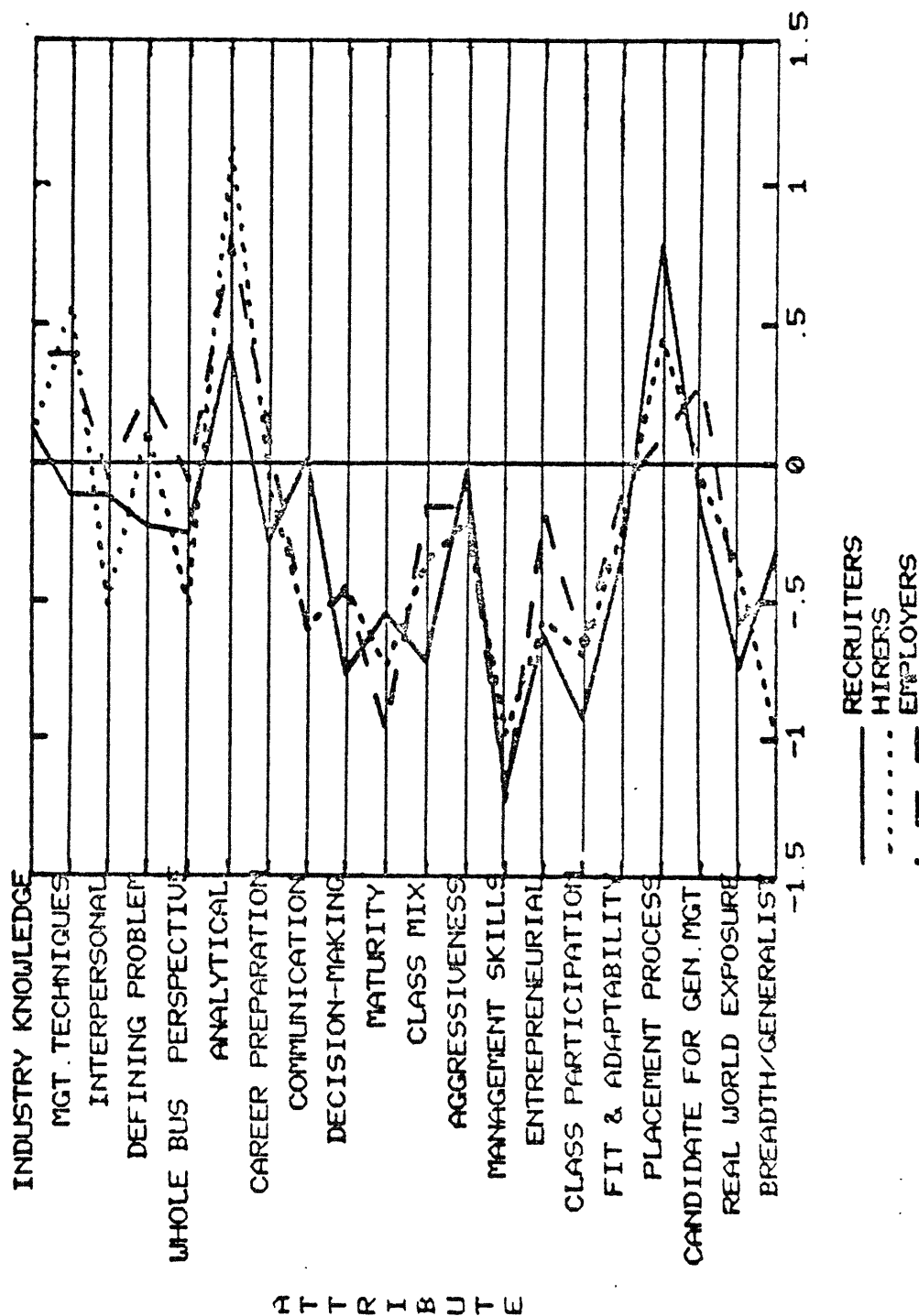


FIGURE 4.4 : AVERAGE STANDARDIZED RATINGS FOR SLOAN BY RESP'S RELATIONSHIP

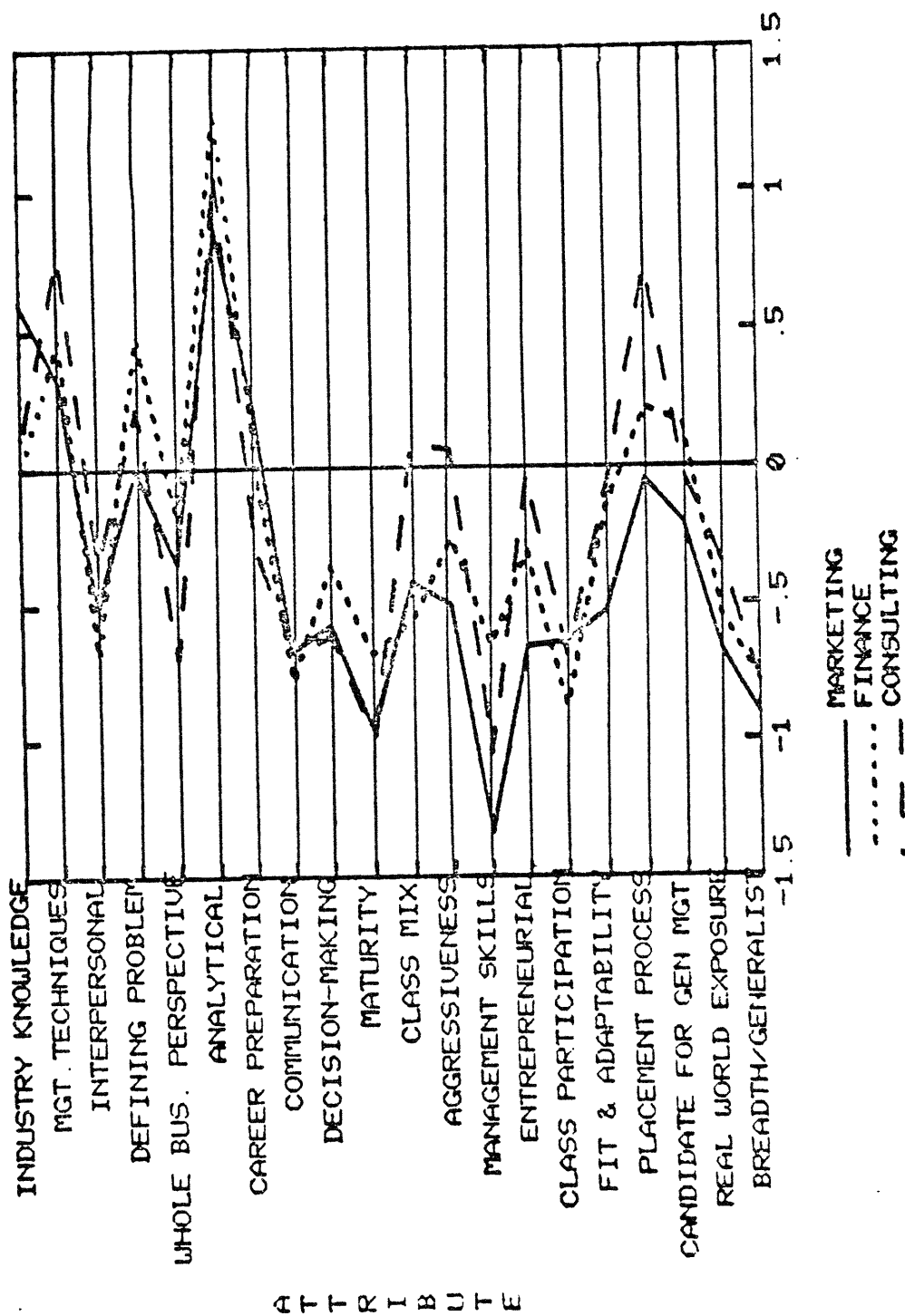


FIGURE 4.5: AVG STANDARDIZED RATINGS OF SLOAN BY RESP'S FUNCTIONAL AREA

evident. Marketing people see Sloan graduates as being more knowledgeable on the company and the industry than do the other groups. However, they rate us lower on both management techniques and analytical skills, on fit & adaptability, and especially on entrepreneurial instincts, management skills, and aggressiveness. The last three attributes are traditionally considered particularly important for line marketing positions and the low ratings on these may explain the difficulty Sloan students have in getting into the line marketing area.

Consistent with the findings from the focus groups, respondents in the finance area believe that our graduates have poor company & industry knowledge. On the other hand, analytical skills are rated very highly and they have more faith in our decision-making abilities and potential for general management than do people in marketing and consulting.

Consultants do not think we are well prepared for careers nor that we have a whole business perspective. On the other hand, they rate our class diversity, management techniques, interpersonal skills and aggressiveness higher than do the other two groups. Interestingly, they also rate the hospitality of the placement process very highly. This could be because they are normally very successful in recruiting Sloan graduates and/or because they are in some way treated particularly well by our placement office.

f. Sloan Ratings by Respondents Representing Different Industries

Figure 4.6 plots Sloan ratings by people from four industries - electrical/electronics, consumer goods, investment banking and consulting. Not surprisingly, the results tie in very closely with the previous analysis of differences by functional area.

Recruiters from electrical/electronics companies are less impressed with our analytical abilities but rate our industry knowledge, communication and interpersonal skills, and breadth higher than do the other respondents. Consumer goods recruiters are also satisfied with our breadth and industry knowledge, but believe that Sloan graduates lack entrepreneurial instincts, management skills, aggressiveness, and decision-making abilities. In addition, our placement process is rated extremely poorly. Perhaps this is due to their limited success in finding suitable candidates in the past. As before, investment bankers rate our analytical skills very highly but believe that we lack breadth, aggressiveness, and communication skills. They rate us particularly poorly on company & industry knowledge, which is consistent with all previous qualitative and quantitative analyses in this report. Consultants rate our management techniques highly but, as in the focus group discussions, they

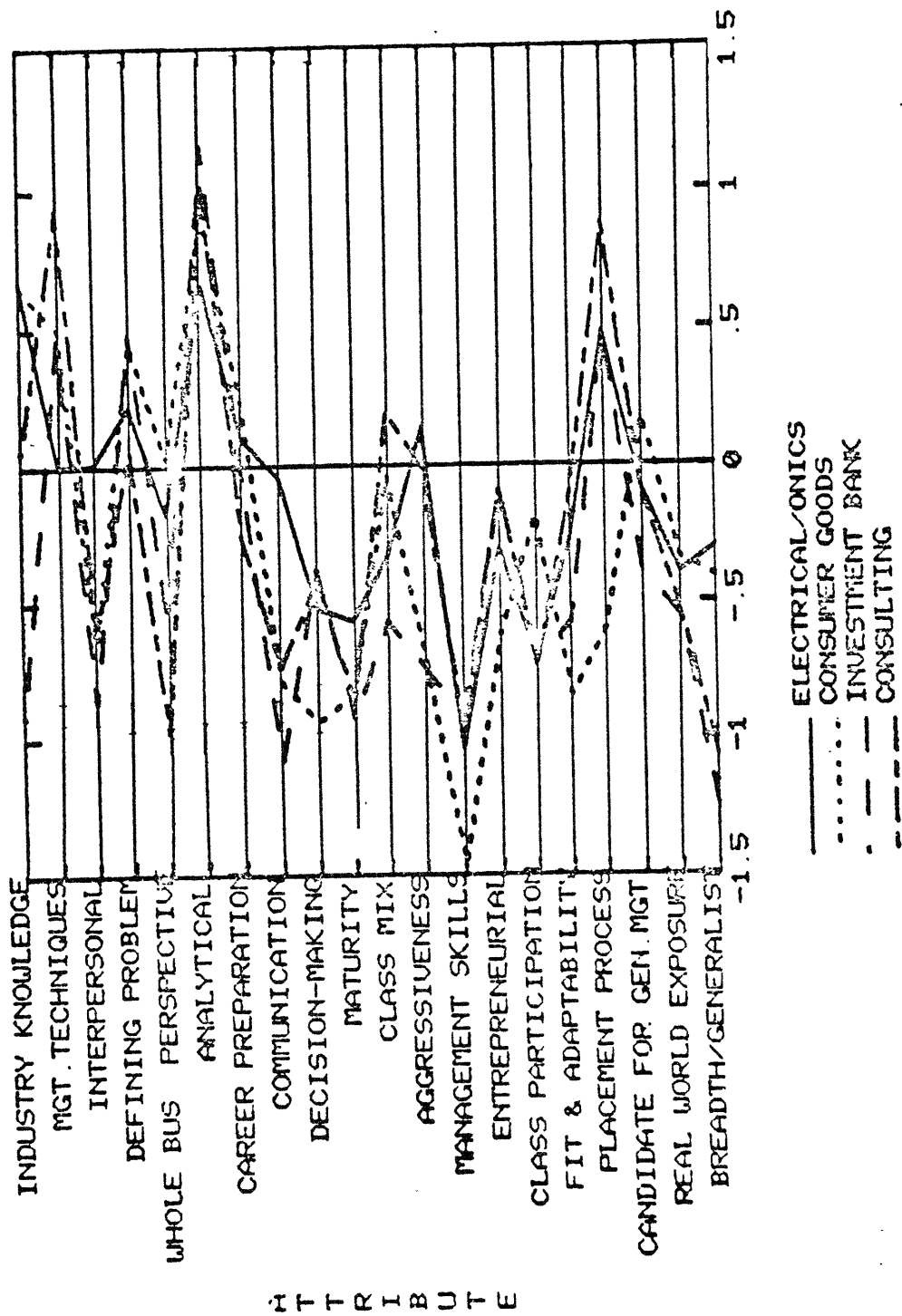


FIGURE 4.6 : AVERAGE STANDARDIZED RATINGS OF SLOAN BY COMPANY ACTIVITY

maintain that Sloan graduates are unable to define the problem in a complex situation. They feel that we lack a whole business perspective, breadth, and are inadequately prepared for careers.

It is worthwhile emphasizing that the quantitative analysis so far has confirmed to a large degree the findings of the focus group interviews.

The next section deals with the perceptions of respondents measured along factors generated by factor analysis rather than along the 20 attributes.

2. Perceptions along Dimensions

a. Factor Analysis :

Dealing with 10 schools, Sloan and non-Sloan recruiters, three groups of respondents depending on their relationships with graduates, 10 functional areas, and 14 company activities is unwieldy when 20 attributes are being considered. Factor analysis is a useful technique for aggregating this data by examining the correlations among the attributes to identify underlying perceptual dimensions. The technique is widely used and has been shown to be superior to discriminant analysis and similarity scaling with respect to predictive

ability, theoretical foundation, interpretability, and ease of use, as long as the attribute set is reasonably complete¹.

Several different factor analyses were done with varying combinations of the following :

- Principal Components or Common factor analysis
- Quartimax, equimax or varimax rotation
- Different eigenvalue cutoffs
- Using all attributes or slightly reduced sets.

Each case resulted in very similar factors being generated. A "best" factor analysis was chosen on the basis of a combination of statistical criteria (eigenvalue cutoff and scree test ²) and interpretability. The factor loadings from this factor analysis are presented in Table 4.2. The cumulative explanations from the five factors were as follows :

<u>Factor</u>	<u>Eigenvalues</u>	<u>Cum. Explanation</u>
1	4.41	23.2
2	1.63	31.8
3	1.33	38.8
4	1.19	45.1
5	1.09	50.8

	AMBITION & SAVVY	ANALYTICAL SKILLS	INTERPERS SKILLS	LEARN FROM CLASSMATES	CAREER ORIENTATION
CO. & IND. KNOWLEDGE	-0.124	-0.011	-0.010	0.050	<u>0.728</u>
MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES	-0.048	<u>-0.653</u>	0.084	-0.112	-0.106
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	-0.336	0.143	<u>-0.689</u>	-0.057	0.106
PROBLEM-DEFINITION	-0.218	<u>-0.486</u>	<u>-0.363</u>	0.097	-0.014
WHOLE BUS. PERSPECTIVE	<u>-0.588</u>	-0.017	-0.348	0.171	0.173
ANALYTICAL SKILLS	0.086	<u>-0.751</u>	0.097	-0.131	0.102
CAREER PREPAREDNESS	0.005	0.050	-0.120	0.025	<u>0.704</u>
COMMUNICATION SKILLS	<u>-0.505</u>	0.250	-0.440	0.085	0.032
DECISION-MAKING	-0.241	0.020	-0.384	0.312	0.336
MATURITY & EXPERIENCE	<u>-0.575</u>	0.026	0.009	0.230	0.326
CLASS DIVERSITY	-0.102	-0.370	-0.104	<u>0.571</u>	0.147
AGGRESSIVENESS	<u>-0.728</u>	-0.104	0.012	0.144	0.197
MANAGEMENT SKILLS	-0.035	0.202	-0.051	<u>0.477</u>	-0.055
ENTREPRENEURIAL	<u>-0.685</u>	-0.113	-0.010	0.006	-0.083
CLASS PARTICIPATION	-0.408	0.172	0.045	<u>0.650</u>	-0.048
FIT & ADAPTABILITY	0.178	-0.075	<u>-0.752</u>	0.152	0.100
CANDIDATE FOR GEN.MGT.	-0.341	-0.088	-0.146	0.117	<u>0.437</u>
REAL-WORLD EXPOSURE	-0.052	0.014	-0.080	<u>0.686</u>	0.203
BREADTH/GENERALIST	<u>0.462</u>	0.128	-0.273	<u>0.448</u>	0.107

TABLE 4.2 : ROTATED FACTOR LOADINGS

This factor analysis used the following combination :

- Principal Components
- Varimax rotation
- Eigenvalue cutoff of 1
- all attributes except placement process

The first dimension correlated with a whole business perspective, communication skills, maturity & experience, aggressiveness & leadership, entrepreneurial instincts, and breadth, and was named "Ambition & Savvy". The second dimension was named "Analytical Skills" since it correlated with that attribute as well as with sophisticated management techniques and problem-definition skills. The third factor reflected "Interpersonal Skills" and correlated with the interpersonal skills and fit & flexibility attributes. The fourth dimension, named "Learn from Classmates", correlated with a diverse mix of students, pressure to participate in class, real-world emphasis, and (less strongly) with management skills. The final dimension correlated with industry knowledge and career preparedness, and (less strongly) with candidate for general management. This factor was named "Career Orientation".

b. Average Factor Scores for Sloan

Figure 4.7 plots the average standardized factor scores for Sloan. The zero line corresponds to the average factor scores for all schools, so that Sloan's relative position is easy to see. There is, of course, no additional information in the factor score plots which is not in the ratings plots. For example, if the ratings on attributes which correlate highly with a given factor are high, the factor score will also be high. However, the results are easier to visualize and interpret.

Units are in standard deviations, but the standard deviation applies to the entire sample. Statistical significance can be computed by scaling down the standard deviation by the number of respondents rating the school divided by the total number of stimuli rated, in this case 361.

As Figure 4.7 shows, Sloan students are perceived to have excellent "analytical skills", to be average on the "career orientation" dimension, but are rated very poorly on "Interpersonal Skills" and the "Learn from Classmates" factors. This is obviously consistent with the previous attribute ratings, given the factor loadings in Table 4.2.

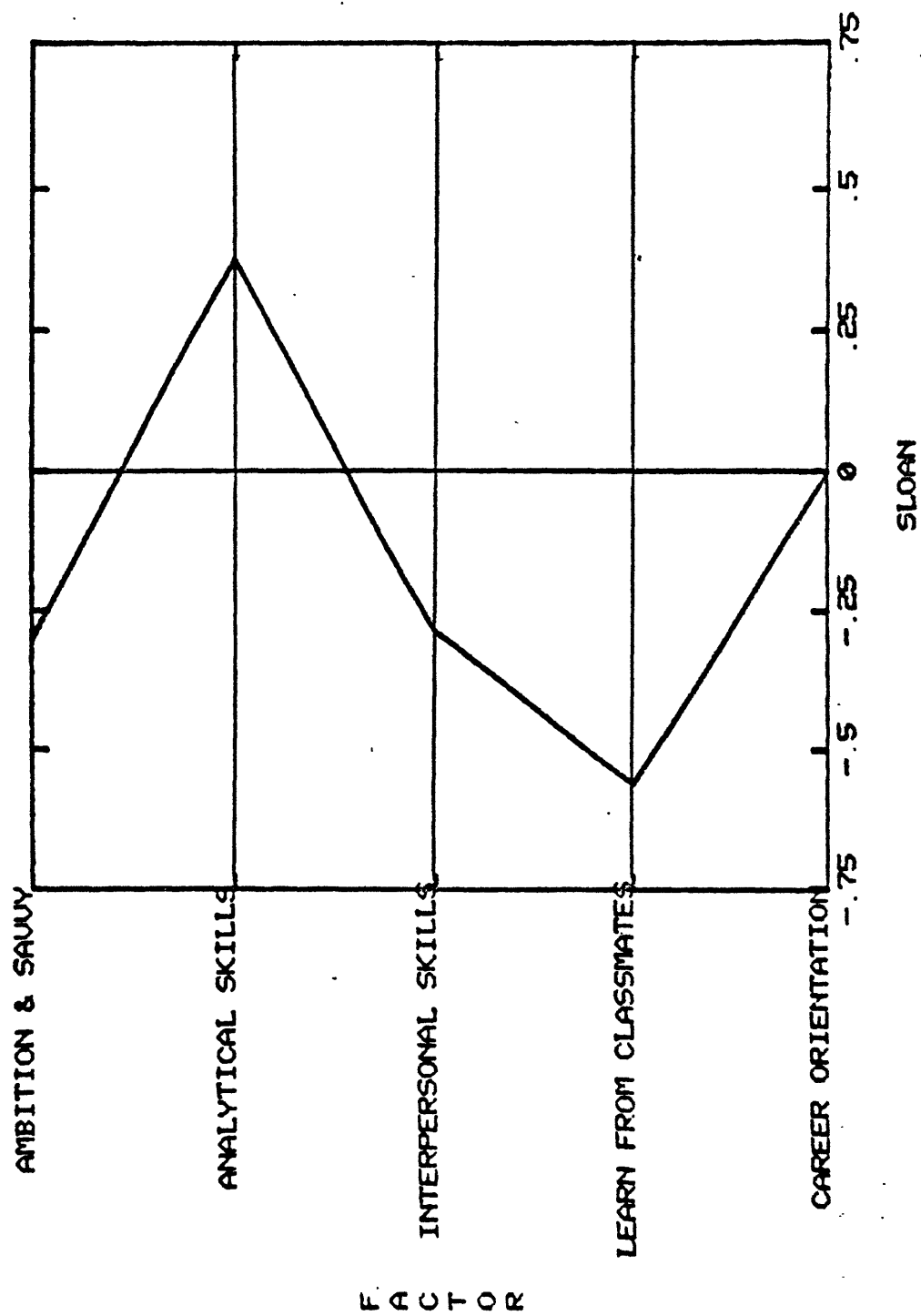


FIGURE 4.7 : AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES FOR SLOAN

c. Average Factor Scores for All Schools

In much the same way as Figures 4.2(a)-(c) represented average ratings for each school, Figures 4.8(a)-(c) illustrate the average factor scores for each school. The actual scores are given in Table 4.3. From these figures, it is relatively easy to gain a comprehensive insight into how each school is perceived relative to the others.

(i) Sloan :

Although we generally consider our graduates to have superior analytical abilities, both Chicago and Stanford are rated higher on this dimension. On the "ambition & savvy" factor, Stanford and Harvard are particularly high, while Sloan fits in close to the others. On "career orientation", Sloan is positioned in the middle. It is on the "interpersonal skills" and "learn from classmates" dimensions that Sloan is very poorly perceived - in fact, no school, including the schools aggregated under "Other1" and "Other2", is rated lower.

Thus the composite picture of recruiters' perceptions of Sloan and our students very closely parallels the opinions of the focus group participants. We are seen as analytical superstars, lacking aggressiveness, real-world experience, communication skills and particularly interpersonal skills. Moreover, the Sloan environment is not considered conducive

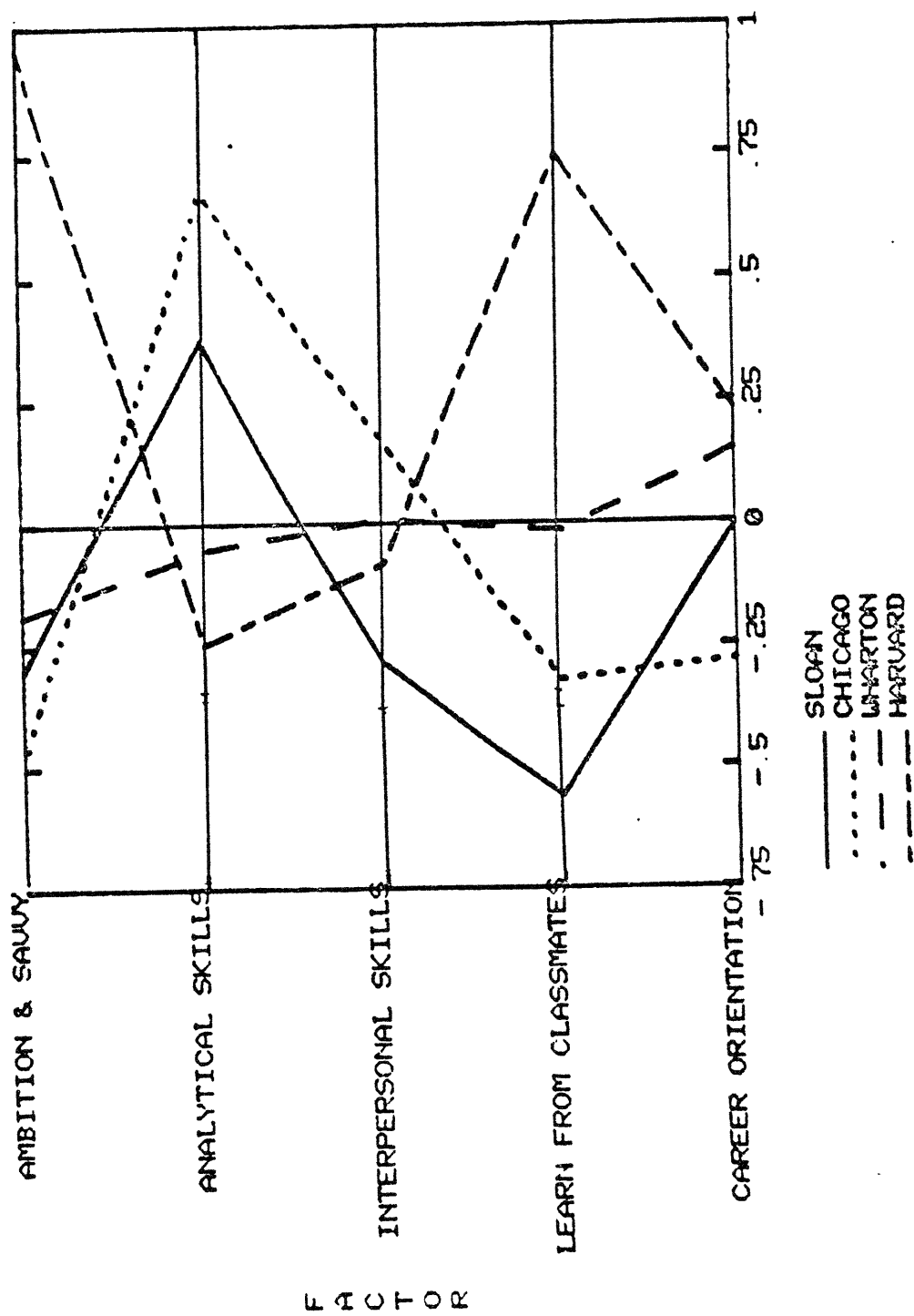


FIGURE 4 S(a) : AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES

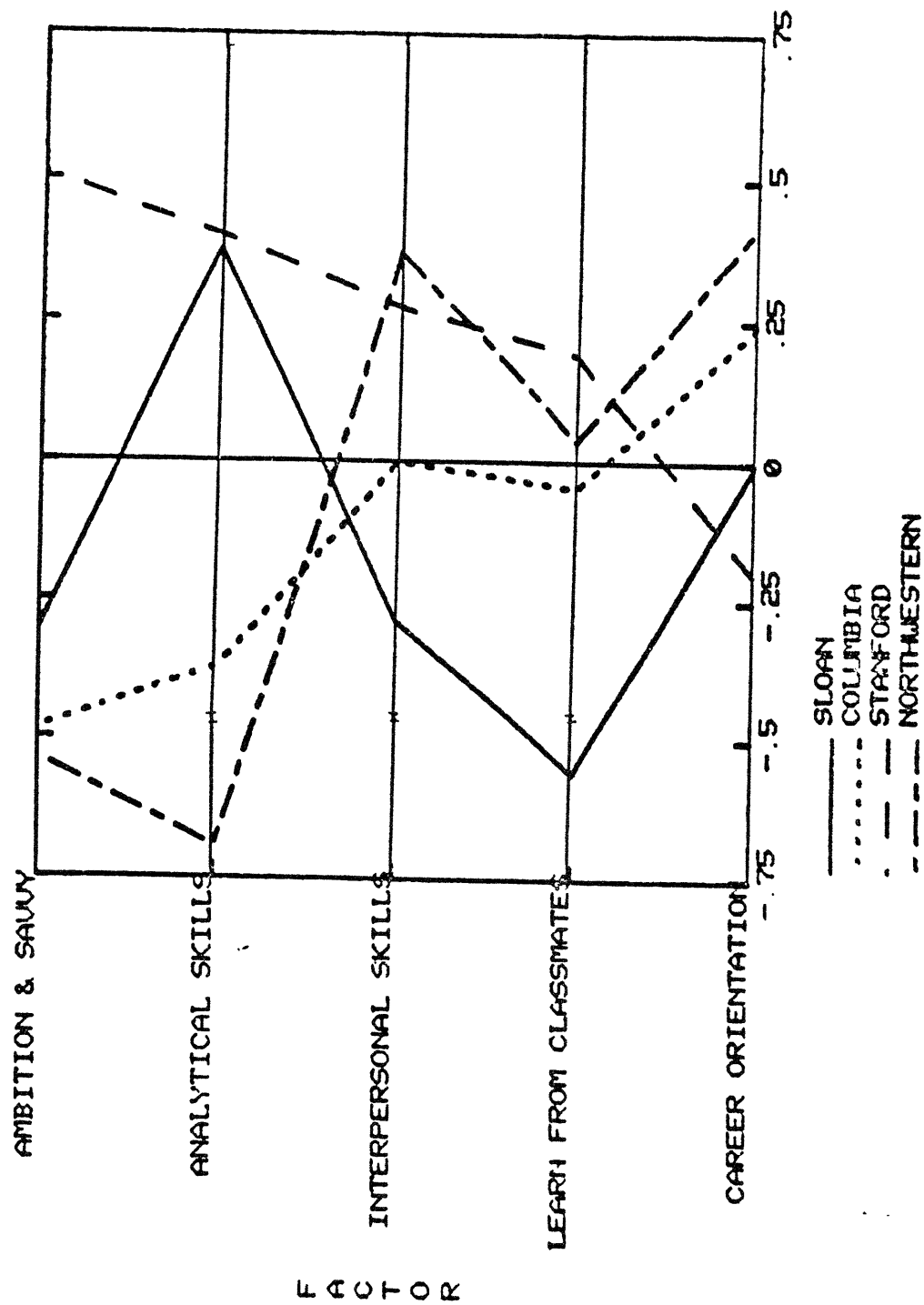


FIGURE 4.8(b) AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES

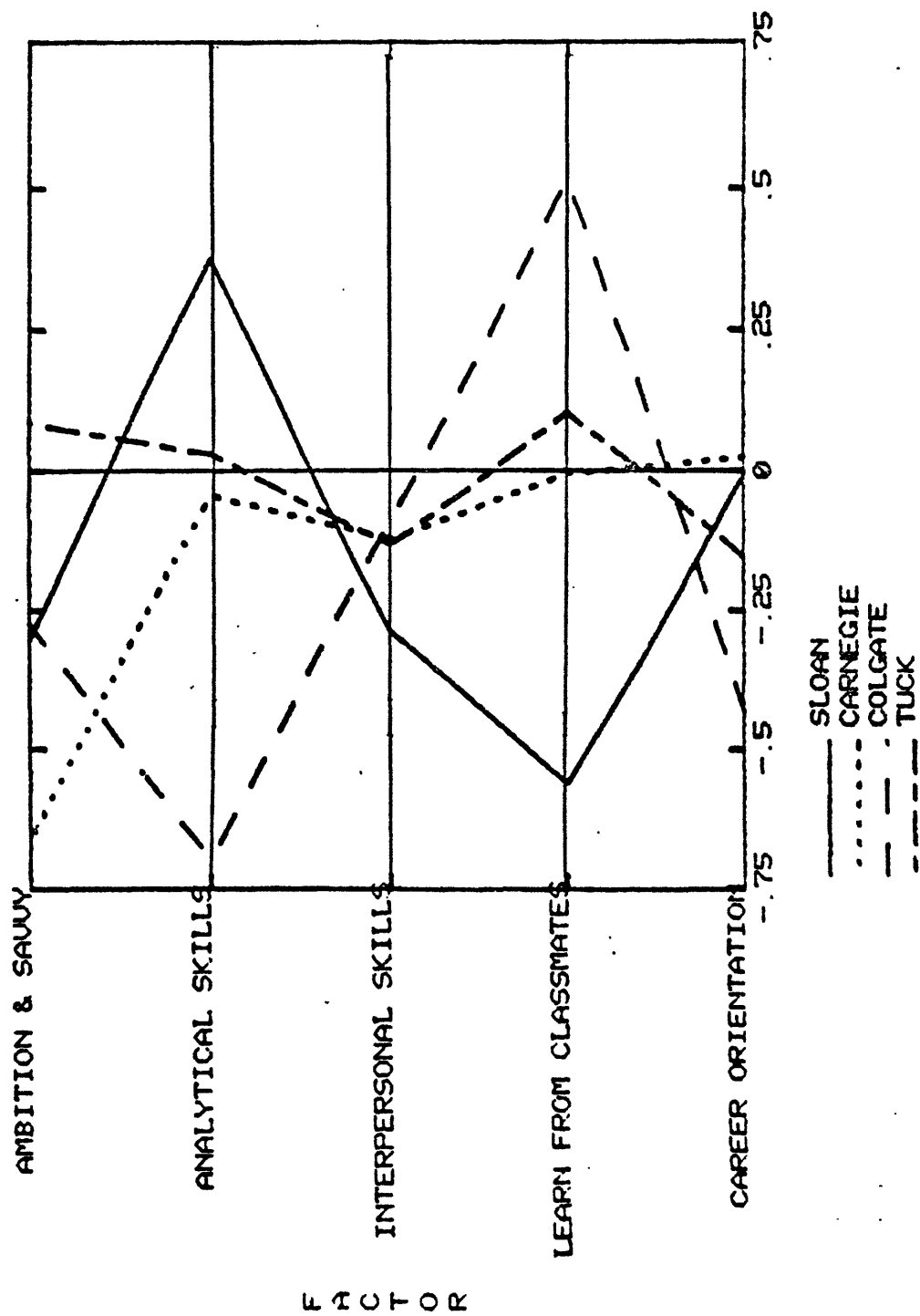


FIGURE 4 8(c) : AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES

	AMBITION & SAVVY	ANALYTICAL SKILLS	INTERPERSONAL SKILLS	LEARN FROM CLASSMATES	CAREER ORIENTATION
SLOAN	-.303	.375	-.285	-.561	-.005
HARVARD	.955	-.247	-.084	.748	.231
COLGATE	-.275	-.695	-.089	.515	-.432
STANFORD	.509	.402	.275	.188	-.2
WHARTON	-.187	-.053	.007	-.015	.151
NORTHWESTERN	-.537	-.692	.371	.037	.421
COLUMBIA	-.483	-.371	-.001	-.047	.244
TUCK	.084	.028	-.133	.102	-.154
CHICAGO	-.476	.679	.17	-.323	-.282
CARNEGIE	-.656	-.042	-.121	-.005	.025
OTHER1	-.526	-.245	.366	-.136	-.301
OTHER2	-.015	-.475	.781	-.525	-.57

TABLE 4.3 : AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES FOR ALL SCHOOLS

for gaining a broad range of real-world knowledge, since the mix of students is narrow, the students themselves are specialists rather than generalists, there is no pressure to talk in class, and little real-world exposure is gained in class or in extra-curricular activities.

(ii) Harvard :

MBA's from Harvard are perceived to be extremely high on "ambition & savvy", corresponding to the stereotype image of the Harvard go-getter. They have excellent opportunities to learn from classmates and to gain real-world exposure both in and outside the classroom. They are perceived to be relatively career oriented, average on interpersonal skills and somewhat weak on analytical skills.

The plots show clearly that Harvard and Sloan are perceived to be opposites on each factor. This is also true of the Sloan and Carnegie plots.

(iii) Colgate-Darden :

This school is rated lower than Harvard on all factors except interpersonal skills, where the two are equal, but the overall impression is very similar to Harvard's. Colgate-Darden students are rated poorly on ambition & savvy and career orientation, average on interpersonal skills and terribly on

analytical skills. The program is believed to offer good opportunities to gain real-world exposure in the classroom.

(iv) Stanford :

This school has perhaps the best overall position. As one of the focus group participants mentioned, Stanford produces graduates who are well-balanced in terms of analytical and other abilities. They are rated particularly highly relative to graduates of other schools on ambition & savvy, analytical skills and interpersonal skills, and the environment is believed to offer good exposure to real-world issues. The school's weakness seems to be in providing students with a career orientation.

(v) Wharton :

Wharton is perceived to be average on all dimensions, not a bad position if balance is what is required by recruiting organizations. Its main strength is the career orientation which its students are believed to demonstrate. This is consistent with comments made in the focus group interviews, especially by commercial & investment bankers.

(vi) Northwestern :

Respondents perceive students from this school to have exceptional interpersonal skills and to be very highly career oriented. Their analytical skills are, however, weak, and they are perceived to lack aggressiveness and savvy.

(vii) Columbia :

The factor scores for this school are similar to those for Wharton, except that Columbia students are rated lower on analytical skills and slightly lower on ambition & savvy. They are relatively highly career oriented and have average interpersonal skills.

(vii) Amos Tuck :

This school is perceived to be average or close to average on all dimensions. Thus Tuck students are well-balanced, but not exceptional.

(ix) Chicago :

As can be seen in Figure 4.8(a), Chicago is perceived to be fairly close to Sloan on all dimensions except interpersonal skills, where its students are rated higher. They are particularly weak on the ambition & savvy factor,

corresponding to their very poor ratings on the maturity and whole business perspective attributes. They are also not perceived to be career oriented. On both the analytical skills and "learn from classmates" dimensions, they are rated slightly higher than are Sloan graduates.

(x) Carnegie-Mellon :

Aside from being perceived as lacking ambition & savvy, Carnegie students are average on all dimensions and therefore similar to both Wharton and Columbia.

(xi) Other Schools :

Although the "Other1" and "Other2" categories are not represented in Figures 4.2(a)-(c), Table 4.2 illustrates an interesting positioning. These schools are considered very weak on all dimensions except interpersonal skills, where they are rated higher than any other school ! Analysis of the actual attribute ratings shows that students from these lesser-known schools are believed to be able to fit in to a corporate environment very easily, in fact more easily than students from any top school.

d. Average Sloan Factor Scores Given by Sloan and non-Sloan Recruiters

The plots in Figure 4.9 confirm the earlier attribute analysis, where it was found that respondents who do not recruit at Sloan rate our students lower than do those who do recruit here. Specifically, they believe our analytical skills to be only average and our interpersonal skills to be very weak. The scores on the other three factors are slightly lower, but not significantly different from those given by Sloan recruiters.

e. Average Factor Scores for Sloan by Recruiters, Hirers & Employers

Figure 4.10 illustrates the differences in perceptions of Sloan among respondents, depending on their relationship with graduates. As before, recruiters are not impressed with our analytical abilities and believe that the environment does not facilitate learning from classmates. Other differences among the three groups are not very significant.

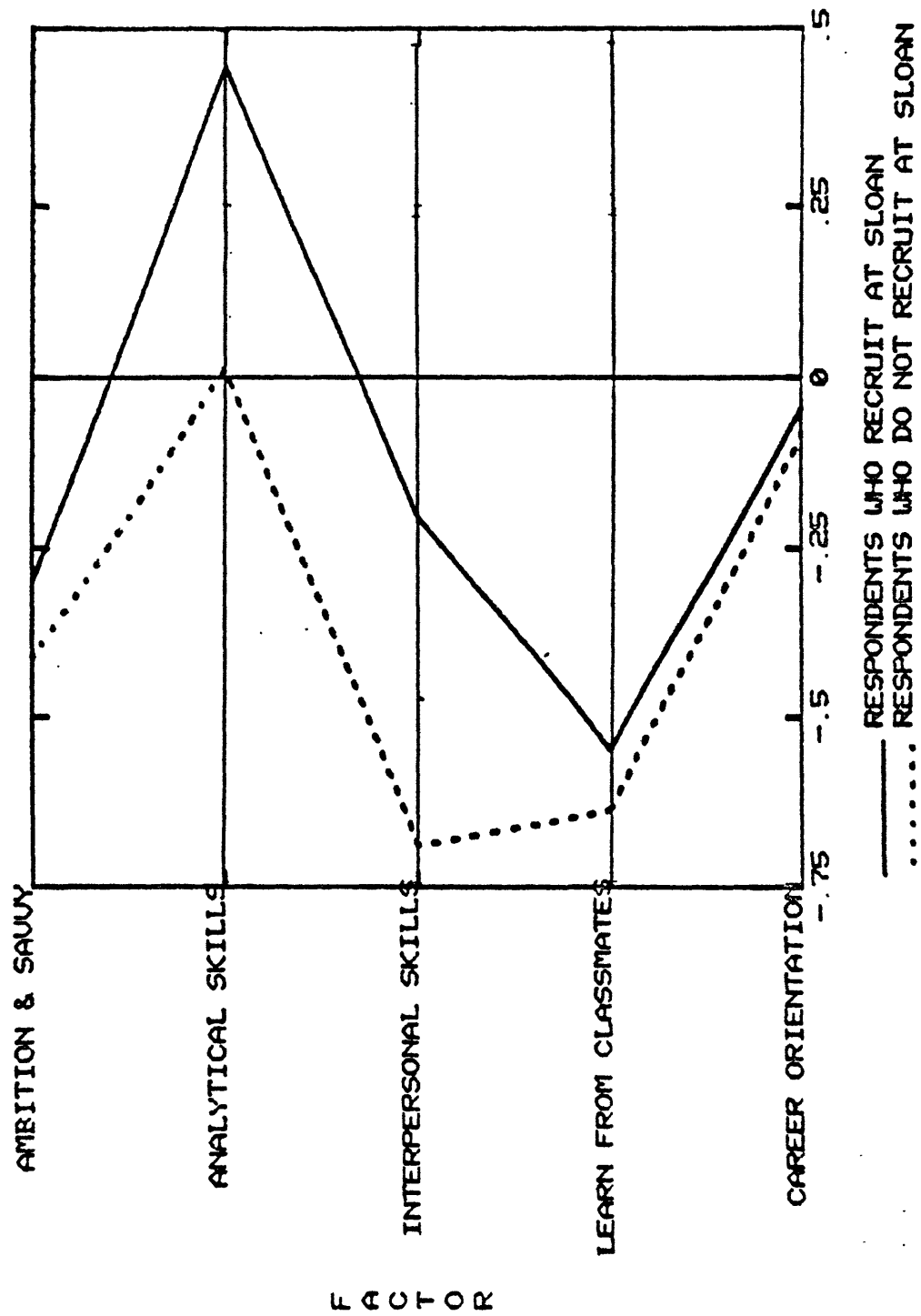


FIGURE 4.9 · AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES FOR SLOAN BY WHERE RESP'S RECRUIT

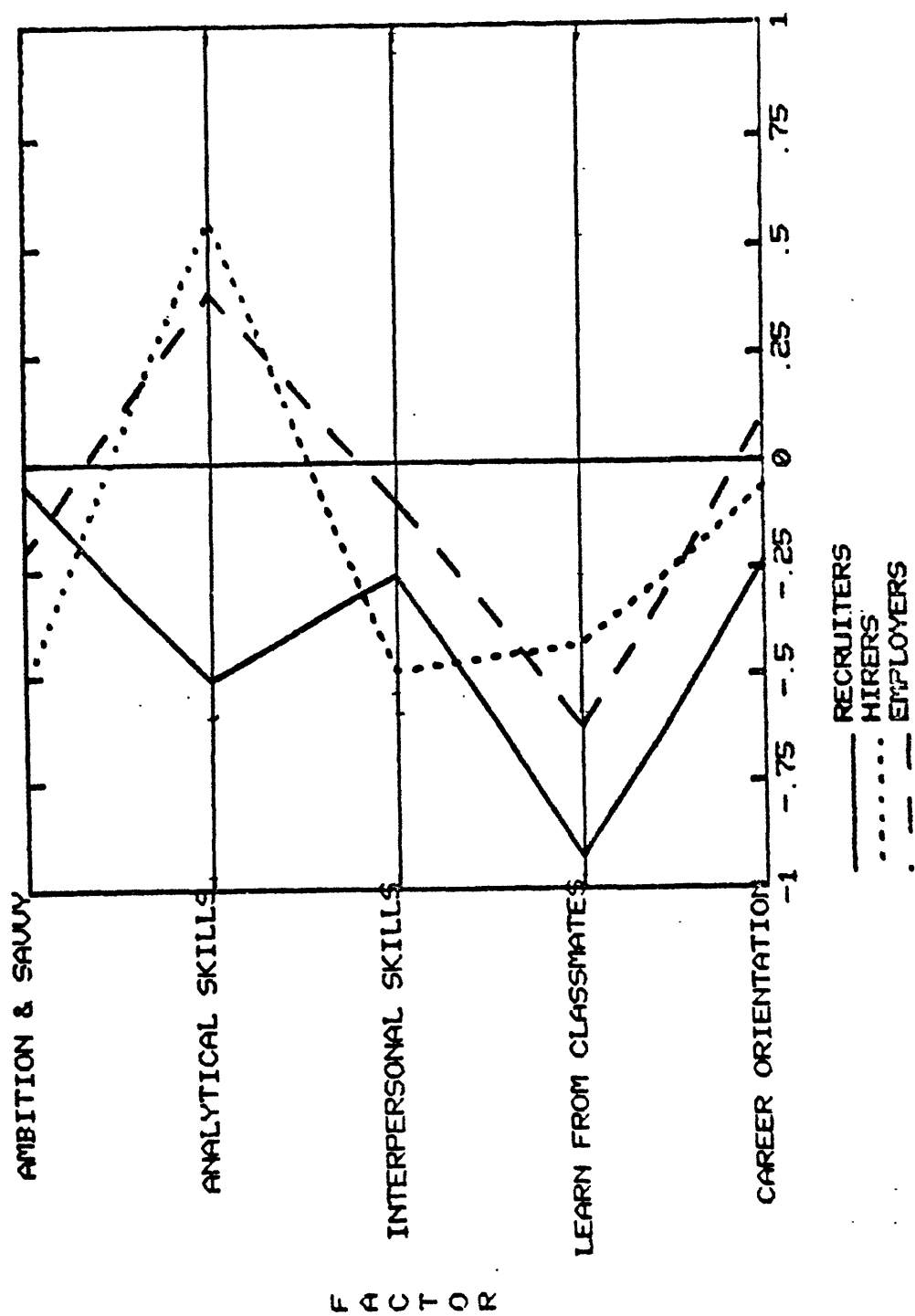


FIGURE 4.10 AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES FOR SLOAN BY RESP'S RELATIONSHIP

f. Average Factor Scores by Respondents from Different Functional Areas

In Figure 4.11, the differences among respondent groups from different functional areas can be clearly seen. Not surprisingly, the perceptions of people in the personnel area are almost identical to those of "recruiters" in the previous Figure (13 of the 14 people in personnel are professional recruiters). The plot confirms what was learned in the attribute ratings analysis of the different functional areas. Specifically, marketing people rate Sloan lower on analytical skills, interpersonal skills, and ambition & savvy than do respondents from finance or consulting. They do, however, believe that our graduates are well prepared for careers in their respective industry. The differences between the finance and consulting respondents are insignificant.

g. Average Factor Scores by Respondents from Different Industries

As Figure 4.12 illustrates, factor scores of respondents from consumer goods manufacturers, investment banks and consulting companies are very similar on the first four dimensions. Investment bankers rate Sloan very poorly on career orientation, while both consumer goods and electrical/electronics manufacturers rate us fairly highly on this dimension.

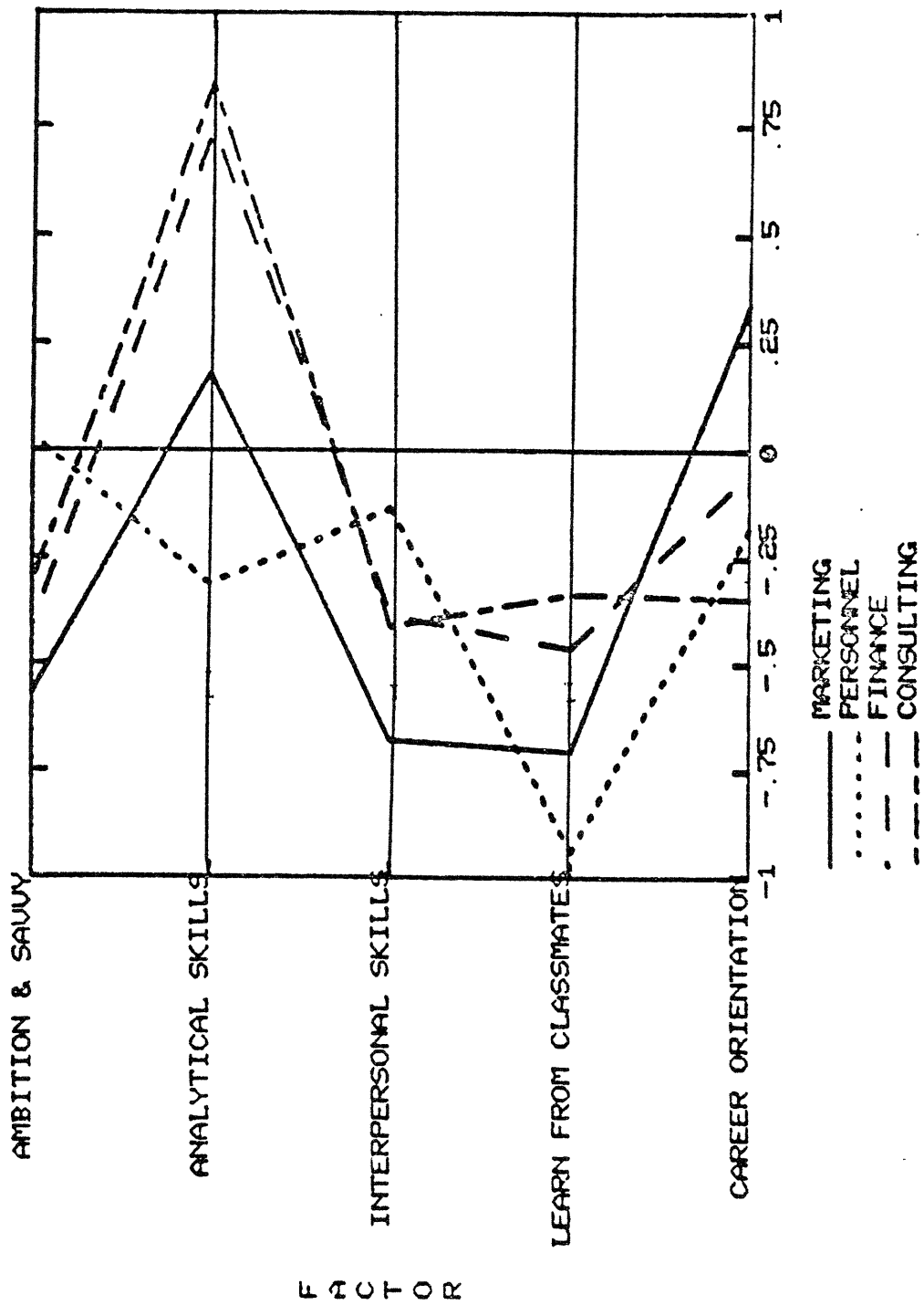


FIGURE 4.11 · AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES FOR SLOAN BY RESP'S FUNCTIONAL AREA

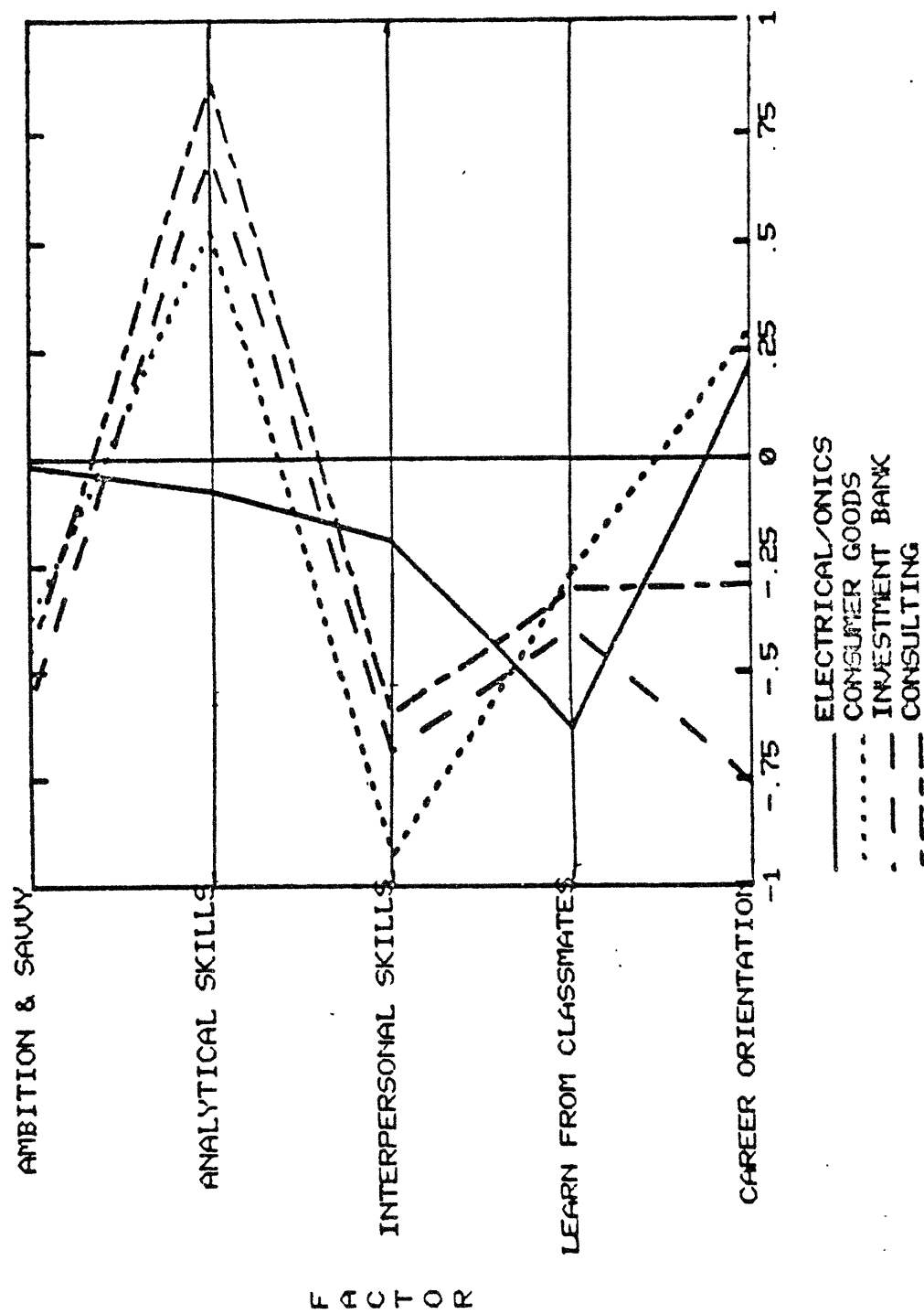


FIGURE 4 12 · AVERAGE FACTOR SCORES FOR SLOAN BY COMPANY ACTIVITY

Respondents from electrical/electronics companies consider Sloan graduates to be below average on analytical skills, but rate us higher than do the other groups on ambition & savvy and interpersonal skills.

It is not really clear, based on this plot, why consumer goods companies do not have much success in recruiting Sloan graduates. The analysis based on the attribute ratings showed Sloan graduates to be poorly evaluated by respondents from consumer goods companies on aggressiveness, management skills, fit & adaptability, entrepreneurial instincts, and hospitality of the placement process. These perceptions are not clear in the factor score plots, however. Perhaps recruiters from these companies expect a certain minimum level of performance on one or two of these attributes, levels which they believe Sloan graduates do not demonstrate. Another explanation was provided by a regression of preference against the factor scores, which showed that consumer goods recruiters place much more emphasis on the second and third dimensions than do other recruiters - they coincidentally rate Sloan more poorly on these factors than do the others.

h. Degree of Consensus with respect to Factor Scores

The factor scores on each dimension have a mean of 0.0 and a standard deviation of 1.0, but it is useful to look at the extent to which there is consensus on the differences in

factor score ratings for Sloan versus a very differently perceived school such as Harvard. In other words, the aim is to get an idea of whether most respondents believe that Sloan and Harvard differ on the five dimensions or whether some do and some do not see differences. Figures 4.13(a)-(e) illustrate this variability for each dimension. Note that the perpendicular distance of a point from the diagonal line represents the difference in the factor scores for Sloan and Harvard for that particular individual.

All but one respondent rated Sloan lower than Harvard on ambition & savvy ; there is a very high degree of consensus evident from Figure 4.13(a) in this regard. The factor scores given on analytical skills are not as clear cut ; quite a number of respondents rate Harvard higher than Sloan on this factor, and there is a wide distribution of differences between the two schools. On the interpersonal skills dimension, differences between the two schools are generally small, while on the "Learn from Classmates" factor, Harvard is consistently rated higher than Sloan. Finally, aside from a few outliers, the factor scores of Harvard and Sloan on career orientation are generally close.

Three types of analyses of perceptions have been presented, namely the results of the focus group interviews, survey results based on the 20 attributes, and finally the

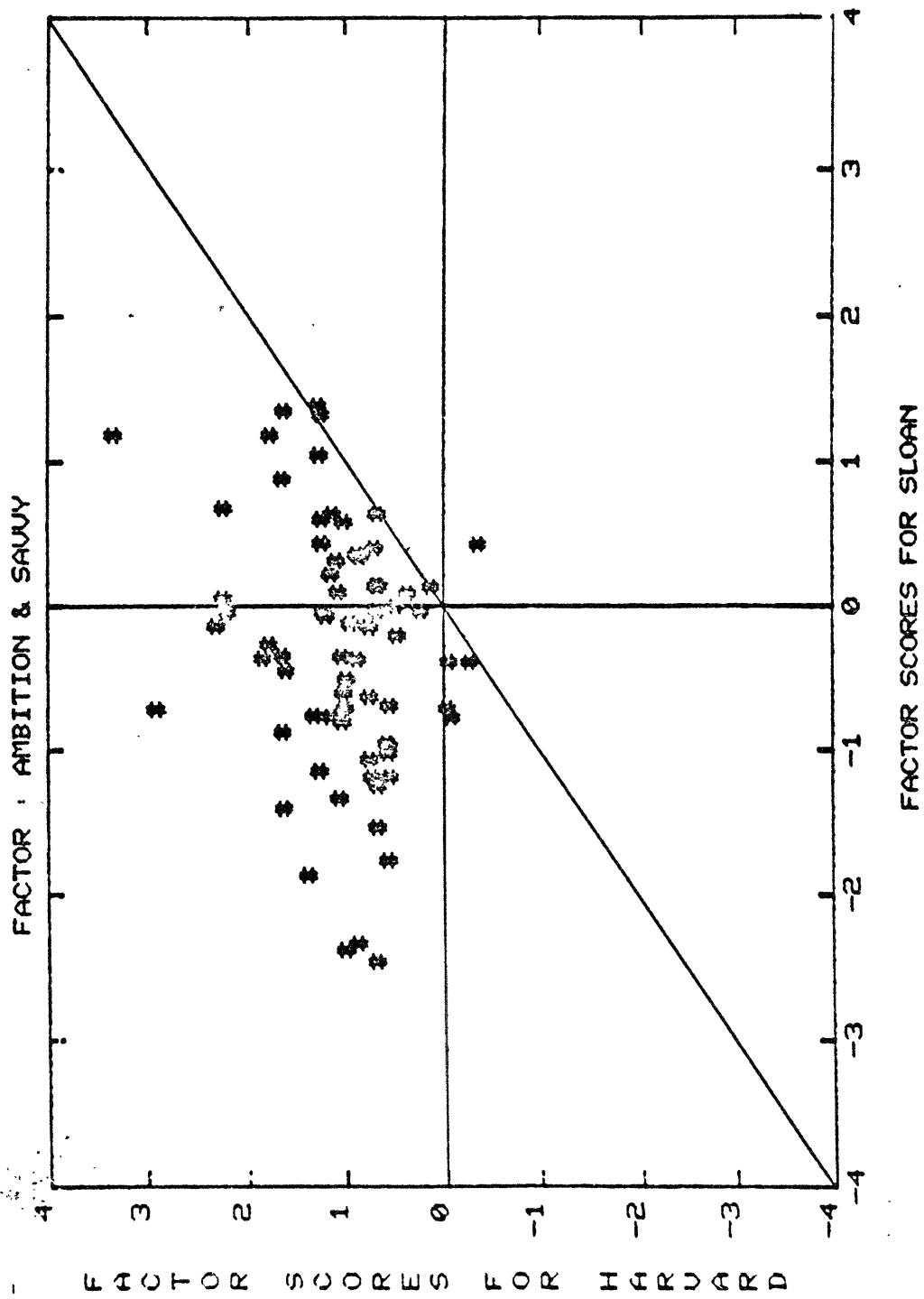


FIGURE 4.13(a) SCATTER PLOT OF FACTOR SCORES FOR HARVARD VS SLOAN

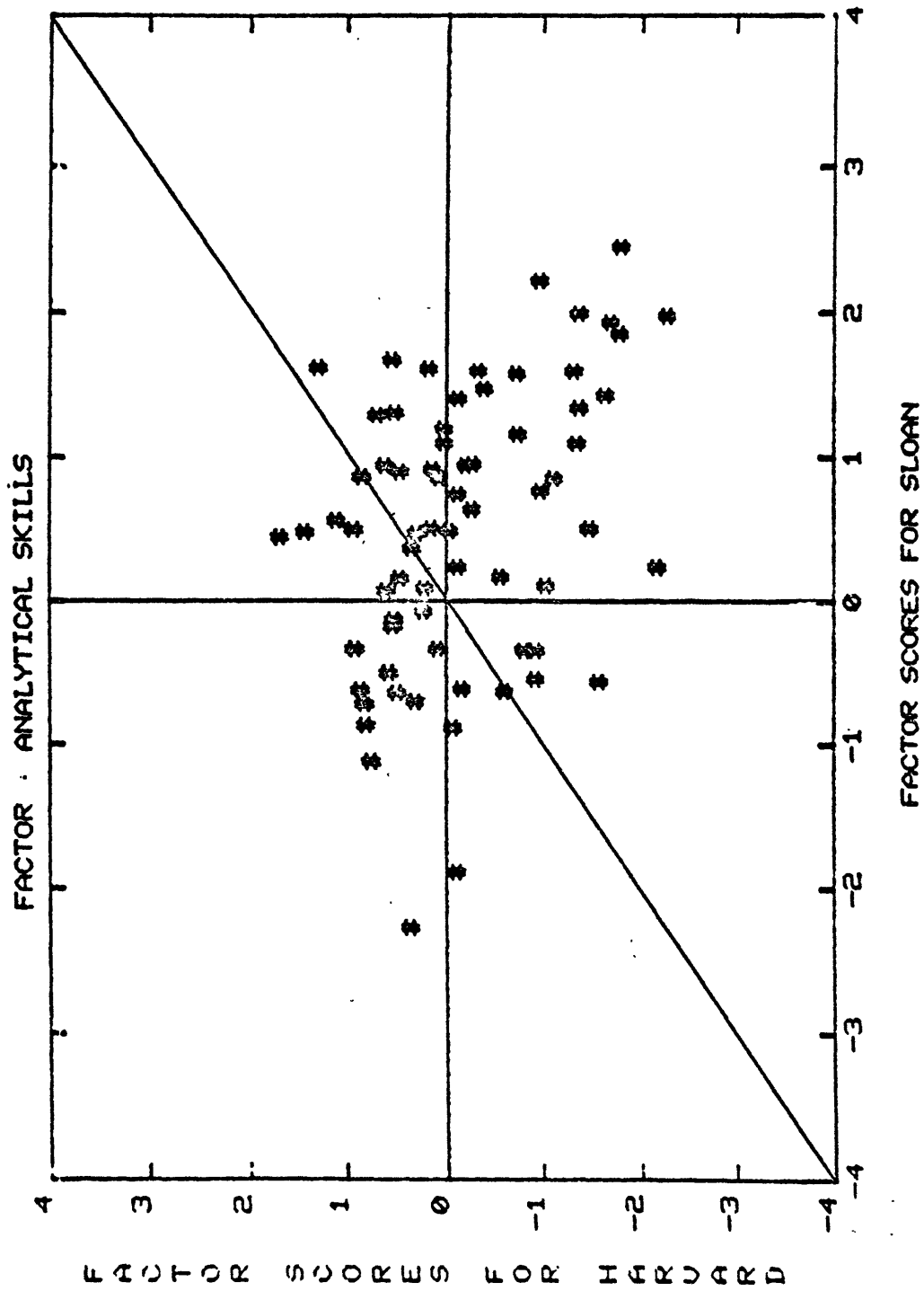


FIGURE 4.13(b) : SCATTER PLOT OF FACTOR SCORES FOR HARVARD VS SLOAN

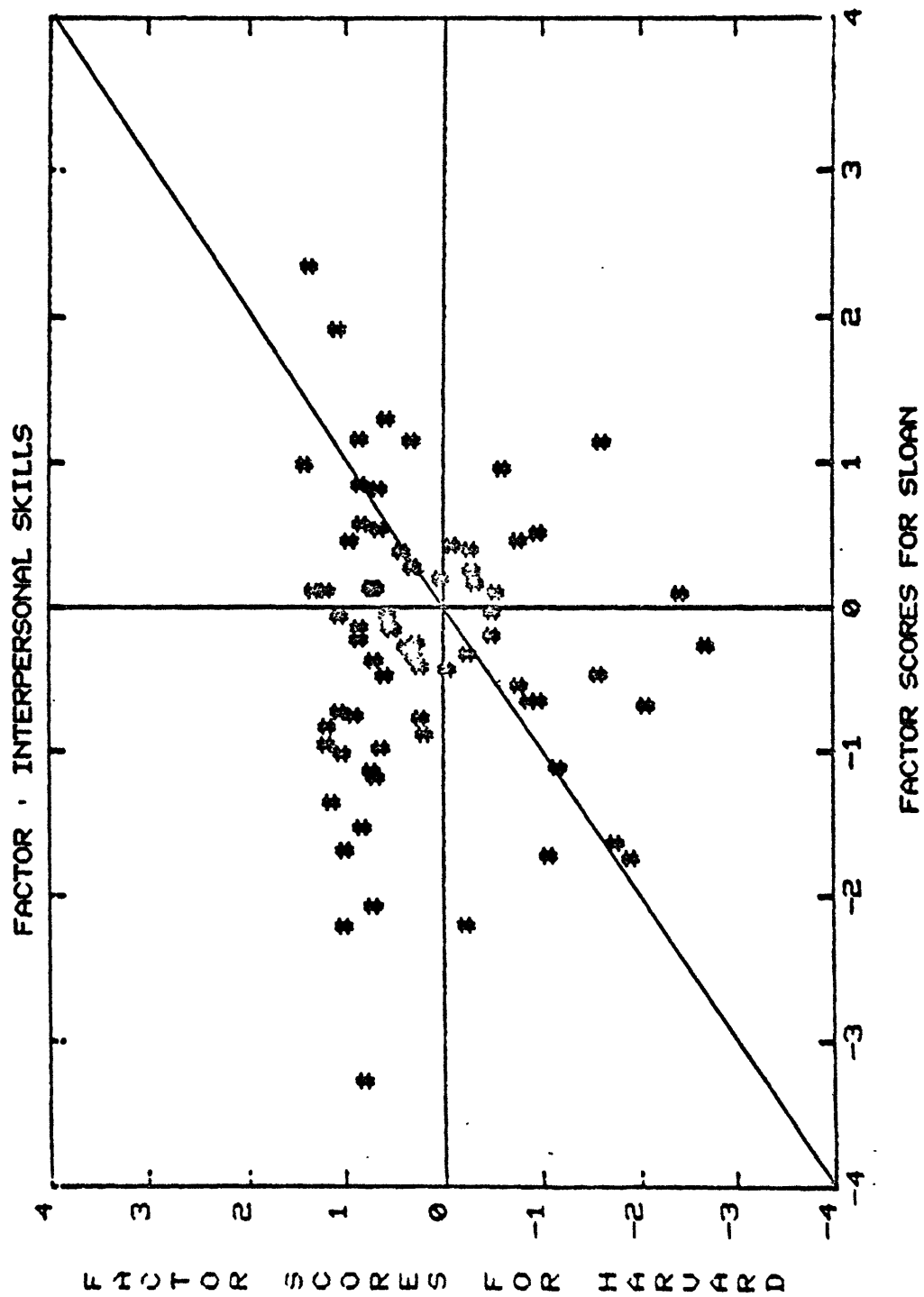


FIGURE 4.13(c) : SCATTER PLOT OF FACTOR SCORES FOR HARVARD VS SLOAN

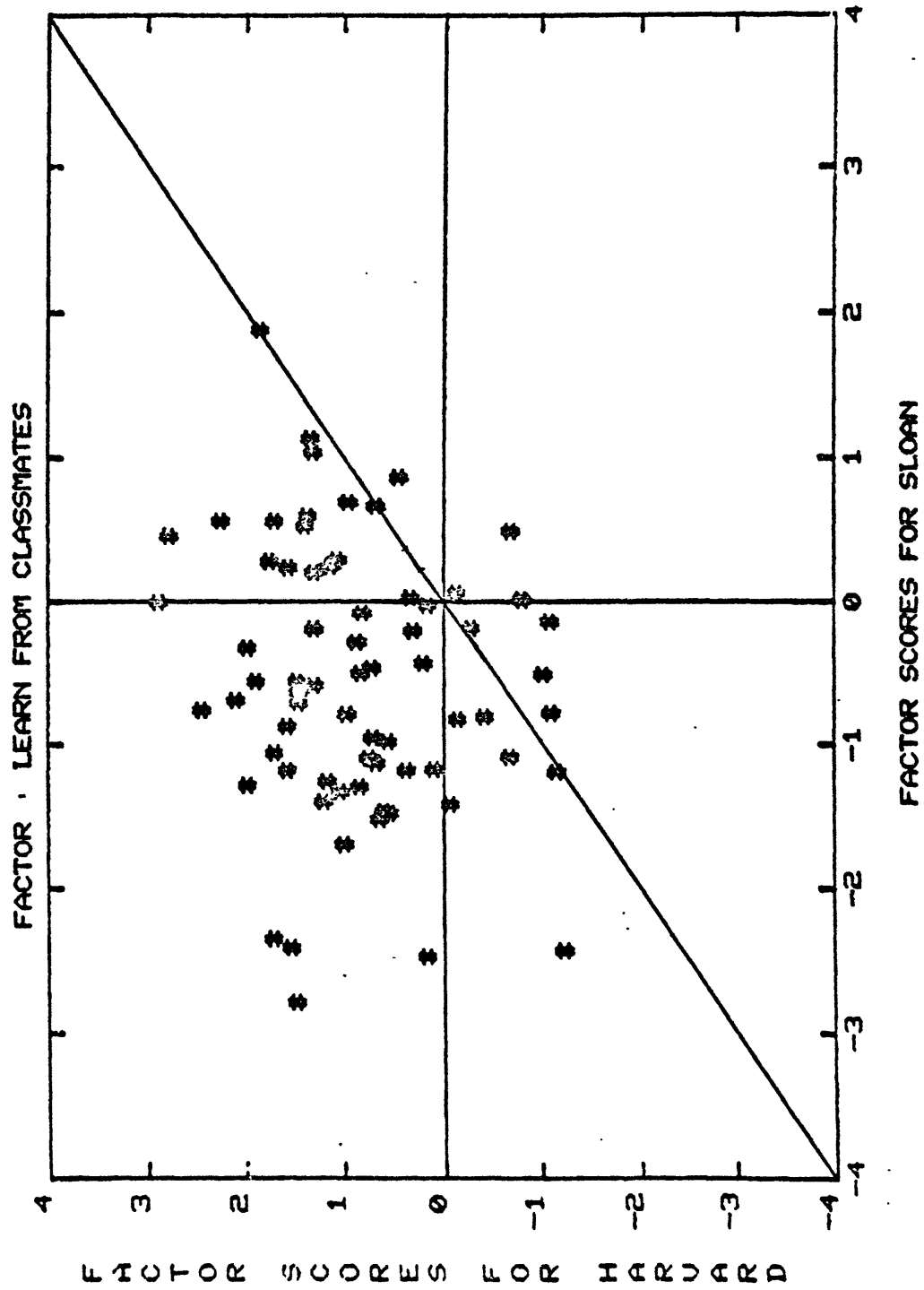


FIGURE 4.13(d) : SCATTER PLOT OF FACTOR SCORES FOR HARVARD VS SLOAN

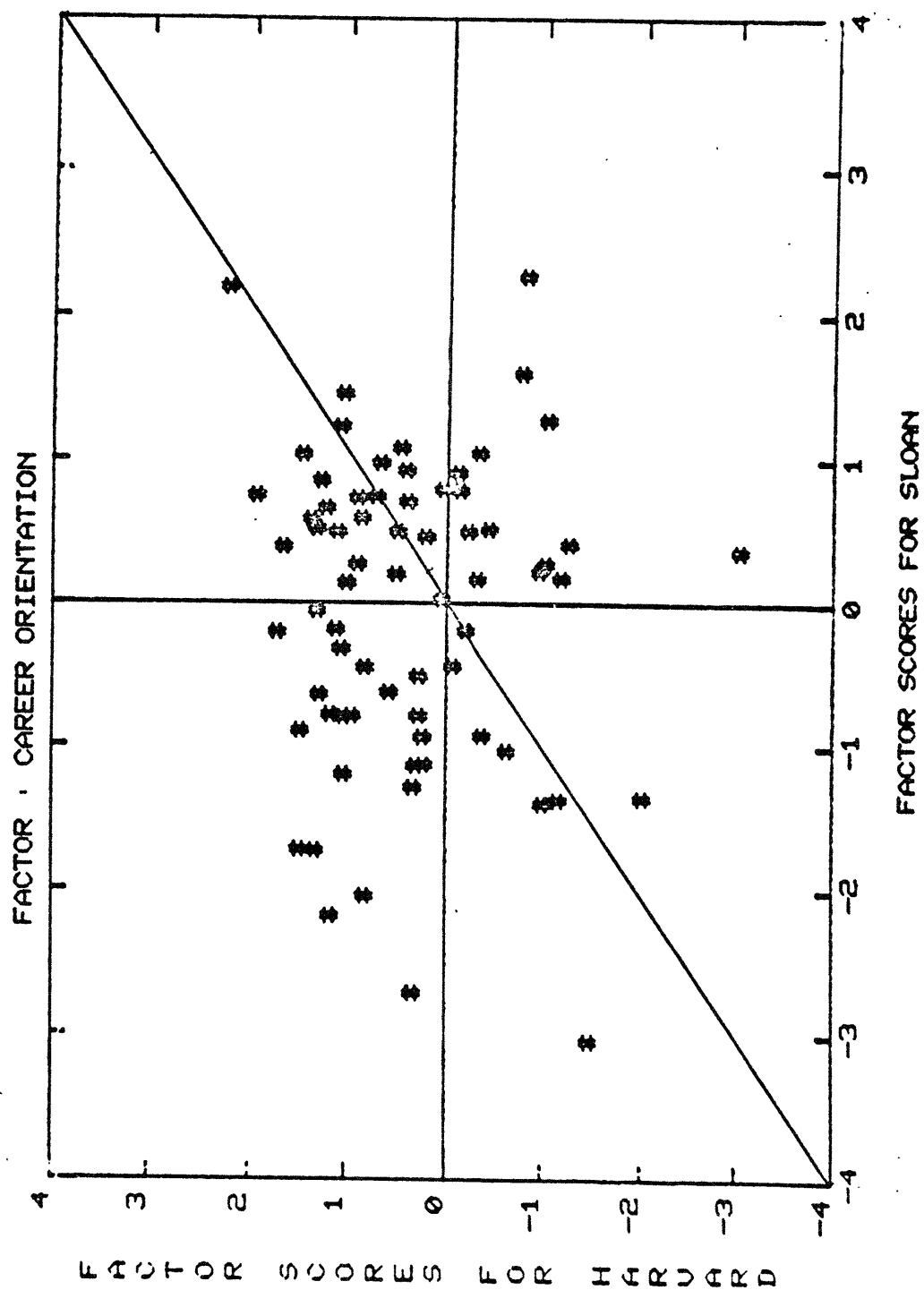


FIGURE 4.13(e) : SCATTER PLOT OF FACTOR SCORES FOR HARVARD VS SLOAN

perceptions of respondents based on the dimensions generated by a factor analysis of the attributes. The results of the three analyses have been remarkably similar. One issue which has not been addressed is the importances which recruiters place on the various attributes and factors. The next section relates the preferences of the respondents to these importance weights.

B. PREFERENCE ANALYSIS

The questionnaire asked respondents to rank the schools which they had elected to rate. To obtain implicit importance weights, this rank order data was regressed against the factor scores for each school rated by each individual. The results are given in Table 4.4.

Theoretically, one would use monotonic regression to relate rank order preference (the dependent measure) to the perceptual dimensions as measured by the factor scores. However, empirical evidence³ suggests that ordinary least squares will provides results that are extremely close to the monotonic results. Note further that because the factor scores are uncorrelated, there will be no collinearity problems in the regression.

	AMBITION & SAVVY	ANALYTICAL SKILLS	INTERP. SKILLS	LEARN FROM CLASSMATES	CAREER ORIENTATION
Coefficient	.403	.293	.289	.295	.289
T-Statistics	8.87	6.39	6.30	6.50	6.45

R-squared 0.44

TABLE 4.4. : REGRESSION OF RANKINGS AGAINST FACTOR SCORES
(ALL RESPONDENTS)

All five factors were highly significant and together explained more than 44% of the variance. R^2 is a metric measure, but in our case it is applied to non-metric data. A more relevant goodness of fit is to look at prediction. The regression equation correctly predicted the first preferences of 67 respondents (out of a possible 92 who ranked their rated schools), for a total of 73%. The coefficients indicate that the first factor, "ambition & savvy" is more heavily weighted than any of the other four, which are all weighted approximately equally. It will be recalled that Sloan was rated poorly on this factor while Harvard was rated particularly highly. Correspondingly, 40 out of the 79 respondents who rated Harvard ranked the school first, while only 14 out of a possible 93 ranked Sloan as their first preference.

It should be noted that "placement process" was the one attribute not included in the factor analysis, but when this attribute was included in a regression as an independent variable, the results showed it to be insignificant.

Several attempts were made to look for segmentation variables which would yield significantly different regression coefficients, but all proved to be highly insignificant. Table 4.5 shows the results of regressions run for both Sloan and non-Sloan recruiters, but the F-score is statistically insignificant. Similarly, Tables 4.6, 4.7 & 4.8 give the

results of regressions run for respondents with different relationships, from different functional areas, and from different industries respectively. While all the individual regressions were significant at the 95% level or greater, segmenting the respondent population on these variables did not yield significantly different regression equations - F-scores were not statistically significant. However, it may be worthwhile for qualitative purposes to point out some of the differences in the coefficients. Table 4.6 shows that recruiters put more weight on "learning from classmates" than do hirers and employers. Perhaps they are less concerned with candidates' specific skills and more interested in the overall learning environment at schools. Unfortunately, the recruiter group rated Sloan very poorly on this dimension.

While finance and particularly consulting respondents weight ambition & savvy very highly, respondents from the marketing area give more weight to the last three dimensions. It will be recalled that the marketing group rated Sloan poorly on interpersonal skills and "learn from classmates", but highly on career orientation. As was discussed earlier, the weights together with the ratings may explain the difficulty Sloan students have in getting line marketing positions.

As can be seen in Table 4.8, respondents from electrical/electronics companies do not consider analytical skills to be as important as do respondents from other

	AMBITION & SAVVY	ANALYT. SKILLS	INTERP. SKILLS	LEARN FROM CLASSMATES	CAREER ORIENT'N	R ²
Overall(N=311)	.40	.29	.30	.29	.28	0.44
Recruit at Sloan (N=216)	.37	.29	.30	.27	.26	0.37
Do not recruit at Sloan (N=95)	.49	.28	.29	.30	.30	0.61

F(6,299) = 0.304

TABLE 4.5. : REGRESSION OF RANKINGS AGAINST FACTOR SCORES
FOR SLOAN & NON-SLOAN RECRUITERS

	AMBITION & SAVVY	ANALYT. SKILLS	INTERP. SKILLS	LEARN FROM CLASSMATES	CAREER ORIENT'N	R ²
Overall(N=315)	.40	.30	.29	.29	.28	0.44
Recruiters(N=40)	.23	.04	.20	.52	.18	0.31
Hirers(N=66)	.42	.32	.35	.29	.29	0.54
Employers(N=109)	.40	.33	.25	.23	.40	0.38

$F(12,297) = 0.95$

TABLE 4.6. : REGRESSION OF RANKINGS AGAINST FACTOR SCORES
FOR RECRUITERS, HIRERS & EMPLOYERS

	AMBITION & SAVVY	ANALYT. SKILLS	INTERP. SKILLS	LEARN FROM CLASSMATES	CAREER ORIENT'N	R ²
Overall(N=204)	.43	.34	.30	.30	.32	0.54
Marketing(N=66)	.26	.26	.32	.35	.38	0.40
Finance(N=77)	.49	.33	.31	.30	.37	0.70
Consulting(N=61)	.61	.44	.24	.26	.24	0.57

$$F(12,286) = 0.92$$

TABLE 4.7. : REGRESSION OF RANKINGS AGAINST FACTOR SCORES
FOR DIFFERENT FUNCTIONAL AREAS

	AMBITION & SAVVY	ANALYT. SKILLS	INTERP. SKILLS	LEARN FROM CLASSMATES	CAREER ORIENT'N	R ²
Overall(N=237)	.45	.30	.30	.30	.30	0.49
Electr. and Chem/Pharm.(N=85)	.45	.23	.30	.26	.33	0.44
Consumer Goods (N=31)	.22	.42	.51	.41	.39	0.45
Comm. & Inv. Banking(N=65)	.44	.39	.33	.35	.26	0.63
Consulting(N=56)	.61	.33	.21	.33	.26	0.54

$$F(18,213) = 0.66$$

TABLE 4.8. : REGRESSION OF RANKINGS AGAINST FACTOR SCORES
FOR DIFFERENT COMPANY ACTIVITIES

industries. Figure 4.12 showed that they also rated Sloan poorly on this attribute, a fact which is not that critical now that the weights are known. Respondents from consumer goods manufacturers consider interpersonal skills to be very important, but rated Sloan very poorly on this dimension.

In summary, although the regression equations are not significantly different, the coefficients and ratings are generally consistent with the success or lack of success which Sloan graduates typically have in seeking positions with these segments.

C. ANALYSIS OF OTHER DATA

The third section of the questionnaire asked for a few items of "personal information", some of which were used earlier as possible segmentation variables.

1. Where Respondents Recruit

Figure 2.4 gave a breakdown of respondents by the schools at which they recruit. Figure 4.14 looks only at respondents who recruit at Sloan and indicates the other schools at which they recruit. The two patterns are very similar so that Sloan recruiters do not appear to recruit at a particular group of schools which is different from the schools at which respondents as a whole recruit. In other words, all of the

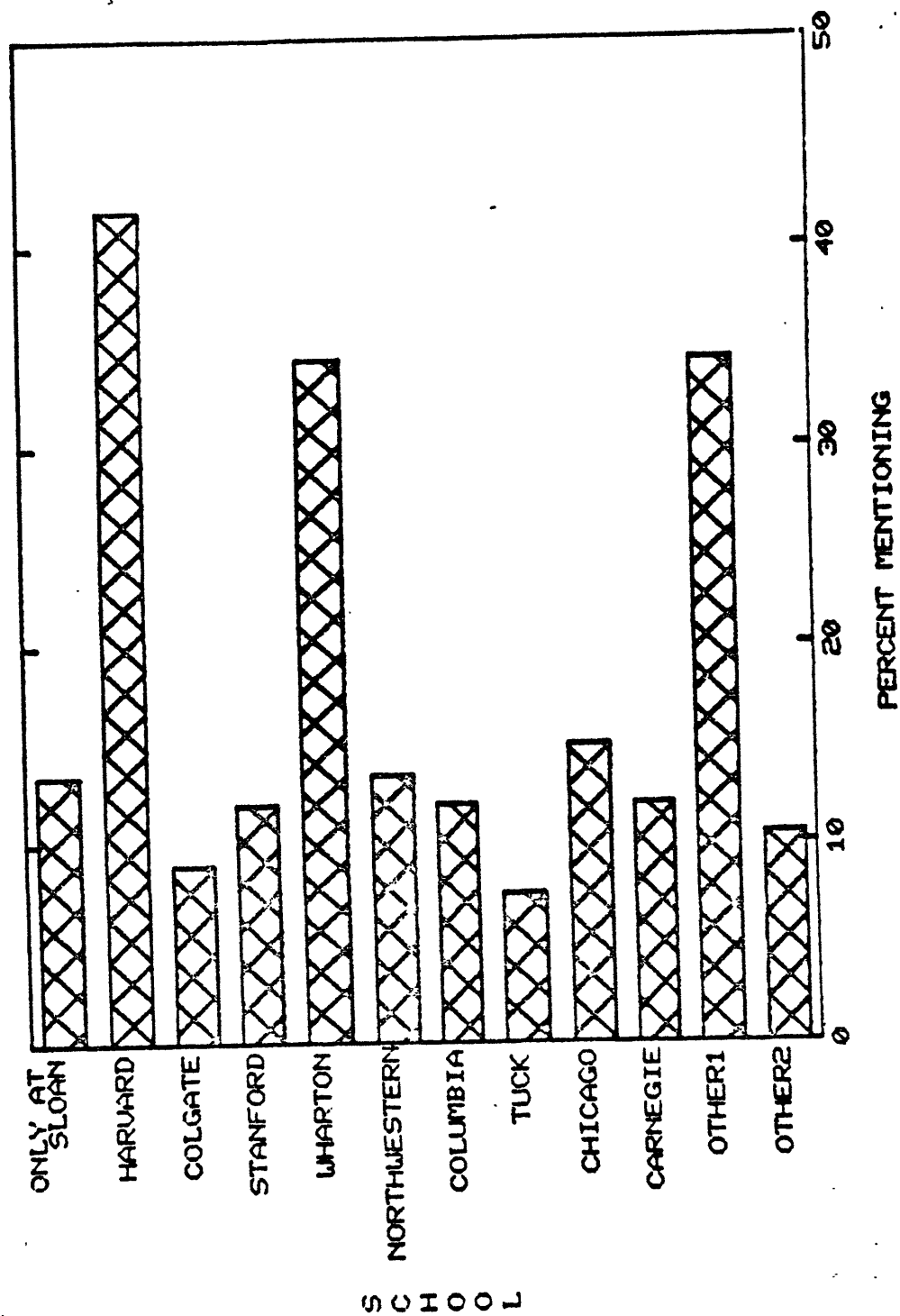


FIGURE 4.14 · SLOAN RECRUITERS - OTHER SCHOOLS AT WHICH THEY RECRUIT

schools which the respondents visit are competitive institutions for Sloan.

Tables 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11 are crosstabulations of relationship with graduates, functional area, and company activity respectively, each with those who do and those who do not recruit at Sloan. No significant differences are apparent from the crosstabulation with relationship in Table 4.9. However, Tables 4.10 & 4.11 indicate some differences between those respondents that do and those that do not recruit at Sloan. Respondents from the finance area are more likely to be non-Sloan recruiters while most consultants do recruit at Sloan. Table 4.11 indicates the same situation for investment banking and miscellaneous consumer goods on the one hand, and electrical/electronics and consulting on the other. It is not clear whether these are generalizable results, but they are consistent with Sloan's current situation vis a vis recruiting by the different groups.

2. Respondents' Assessment of the Impact of Management Education

The survey asked whether differences among graduates within a school are more important than differences across schools, and also whether a graduate's success comes more from his/her innate abilities rather than from graduate management education. Figures 4.15 and 4.16 show that respondents were

RELATIONSHIP WITH GRADUATES	RECRUIT AT SLOAN	DO NOT RECRUIT AT SLOAN	ALL RESP
TOTAL	67 100.00%	32 100.00%	99 100.00%
RECRUITER	9 13.43%	4 12.50%	13 13.13%
HIRER	34 50.75%	19 59.38%	53 53.54%
EMPLOYER	24 35.82%	9 28.13%	33 33.33%

TABLE 4.9 : RELATIONSHIP BY WHETHER RECRUITS AT SLOAN

MAIN FUNCTIONAL AREA	DO NOT		ALL RESP
	RECRUIT AT SLOAN	RECRUIT AT SLOAN	
TOTAL	67 100.00%	33 100.00%	100 100.00%
MARKETING	11 16.42%	7 21.21%	18 18.00%
ENGIN/RESEARCH	1 1.49%	0 0.00%	1 1.00%
MANUFACTURING	1 1.49%	1 3.03%	2 2.00%
PERSONNEL	12 17.91%	7 21.21%	19 19.00%
INFORM. SYSTEMS	3 4.48%	0 0.00%	3 3.00%
FINANCE	12 17.91%	12 36.36%	24 24.00%
GEN. MANGT.	4 5.97%	3 9.09%	7 7.00%
CONSULTING	16 23.88%	2 6.06%	18 18.00%
ACCOUNTING	2 2.99%	0 0.00%	2 2.00%
OTHER	5 7.46%	1 3.03%	6 6.00%

TABLE 4.10 : FUNCTIONAL AREA BY WHETHER RECRUITS AT SLOAN

COMPANY ACTIVITY	RECRUIT AT SLOAN	DO NOT RECRUIT AT SLOAN	ALL RESP
TOTAL	67 100.00%	33 100.00%	100 100.00%
ELECTRICAL/ ELECTRONICS	14 20.90%	2 6.06%	16 16.00%
CHEMICAL/ PHARMACEUTICAL	6 8.96%	5 15.15%	11 11.00%
MISCELLANEOUS CONSUMER GOODS	3 4.48%	5 15.15%	8 8.00%
ENERGY	5 7.46%	0 0.00%	5 5.00%
OTHER MANUFACTURING	5 7.46%	0 0.00%	5 5.00%
COMMERCIAL BANKING	5 7.46%	5 15.15%	10 10.00%
INVESTMENT BANKING	2 2.99%	9 27.27%	11 11.00%
CONSULTING	15 22.39%	2 6.06%	17 17.00%
COMPUTER SERVICES	2 2.99%	0 0.00%	2 2.00%
ACCOUNTING/ AUDITING	4 5.97%	0 0.00%	4 4.00%
MISC. FINANCIAL SERVICES	1 1.49%	0 0.00%	1 1.00%
OTHER SERVICES	5 7.46%	5 15.15%	10 10.00%

TABLE 4.11 : COMPANY ACTIVITY BY WHETHER RECRUITS AT SLOAN

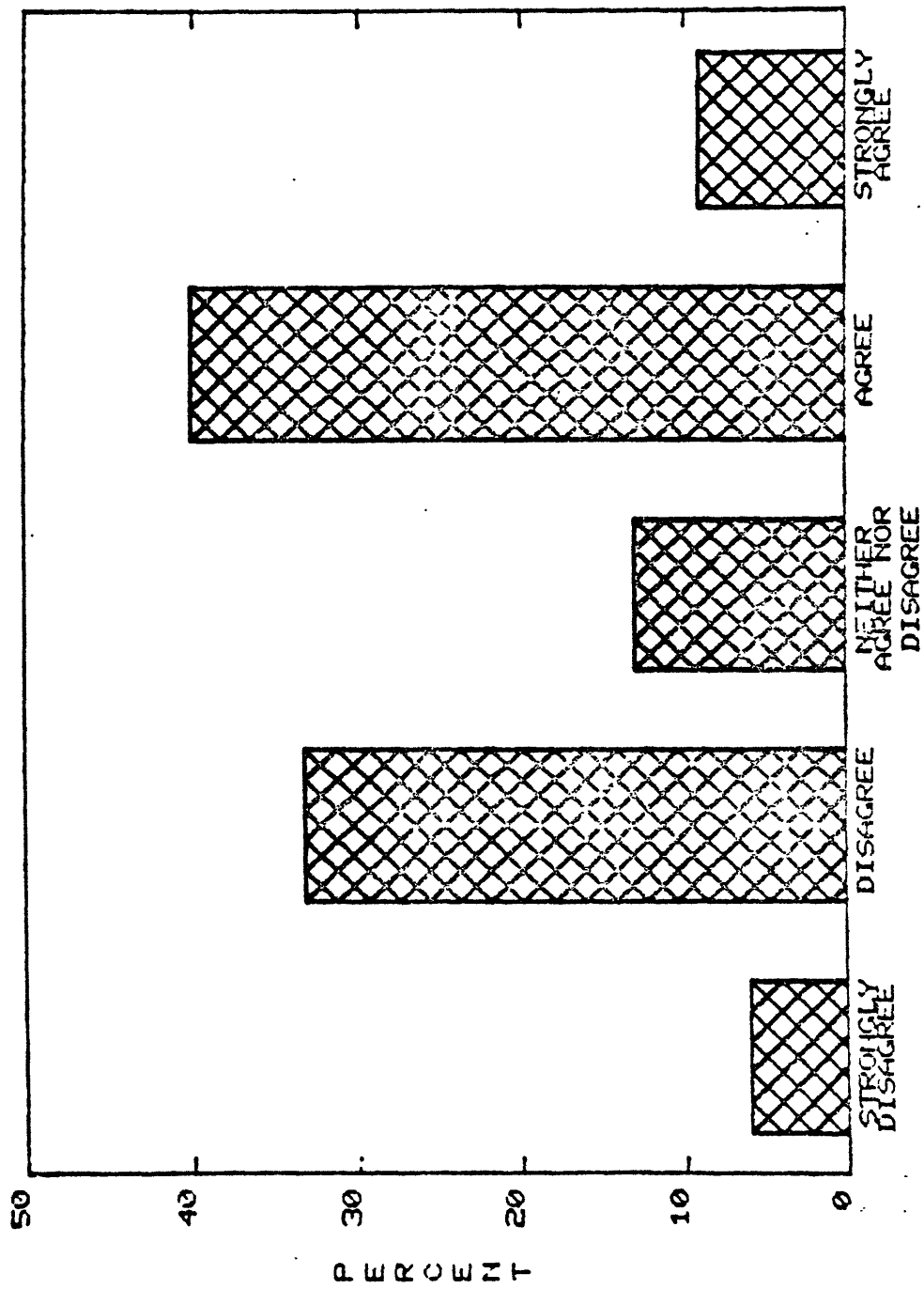


FIGURE 4.15 : RESPONSES TO QUESTION ON INNATE ABILITIES VS MGT. EDUCATION

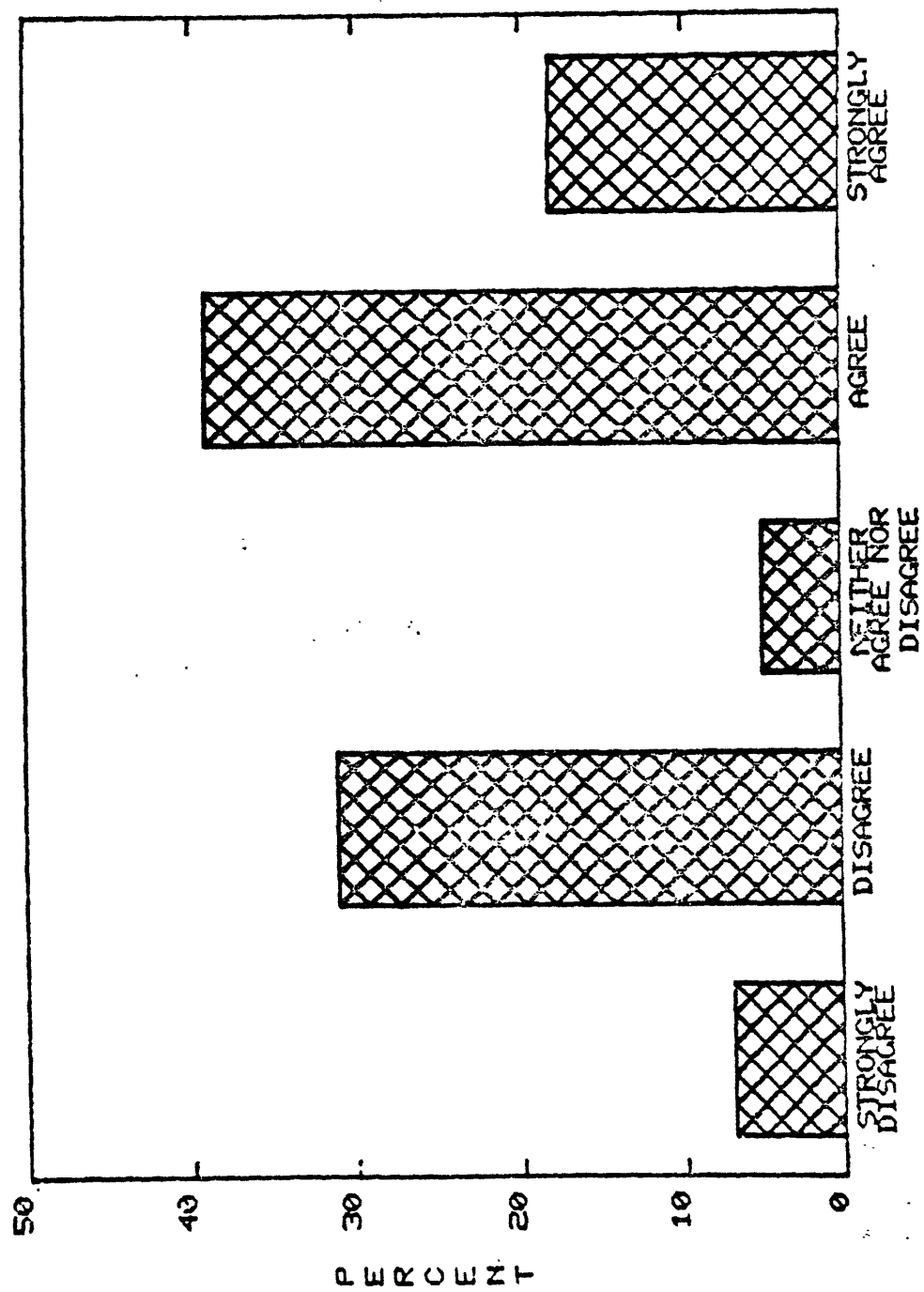


FIGURE 4.16 : RESPONSES TO DIFF'S AMONG GRADS VS DIFF'S AMONG SCHOOLS

approximately evenly split on both these questions. On the 5-point scales, most checked either the "agree" or the "disagree" responses. It also turns out that the correlation between the responses to these two questions is a very high 0.61. Thus, there seems to be two types of recruiters - those who believe that the school attended by a candidate is an excellent indicator of potential, and those who feel that each individual is a different entity whose potential is somewhat independent of the business school they attended. The first group would decide whether to recruit at a school based on their perceptions of the program, while the second might decide to recruit at a school because of some other reasons such as geographical proximity or previous ties with the school.

Crosstabulations of responses to the two questions with functional area, company activity, relationship with graduates, and recruit/do not recruit at Sloan did not yield any significant information (i.e. responses did not differ significantly depending on these variables) and are therefore not produced here.

3. Sources of Information and Perceptions

Understanding the perceptions of recruiters has been the main thrust of this report, but it is critical to have some feel for the sources of these perceptions if a school is interested

in changing them in some way. Figure 4.17 illustrates the responses to the question relating to the sources of respondents' perceptions. Of the 99 respondents who completed this section, 95% claimed that their perceptions are based on, among other things, their prior experiences with MBA graduates. In descending order, other sources are visits to schools, recruiters' own business school experiences, general reputation, and from friends who have attended business schools. Only a few acknowledge that they are influenced by the recommendations of people at their companies, and even fewer consider published information in the media to be a source of perceptions.

It is significant that the most important sources all depend on recruiters' experiences - with MBA graduates, visits to schools, from their own business school experiences, from friends who have attended MBA programs, etc. A school such as Sloan, with a relatively small student body and alumni group, is therefore at a disadvantage since it is difficult to change the perceptions of recruiters other than on an experiential basis.

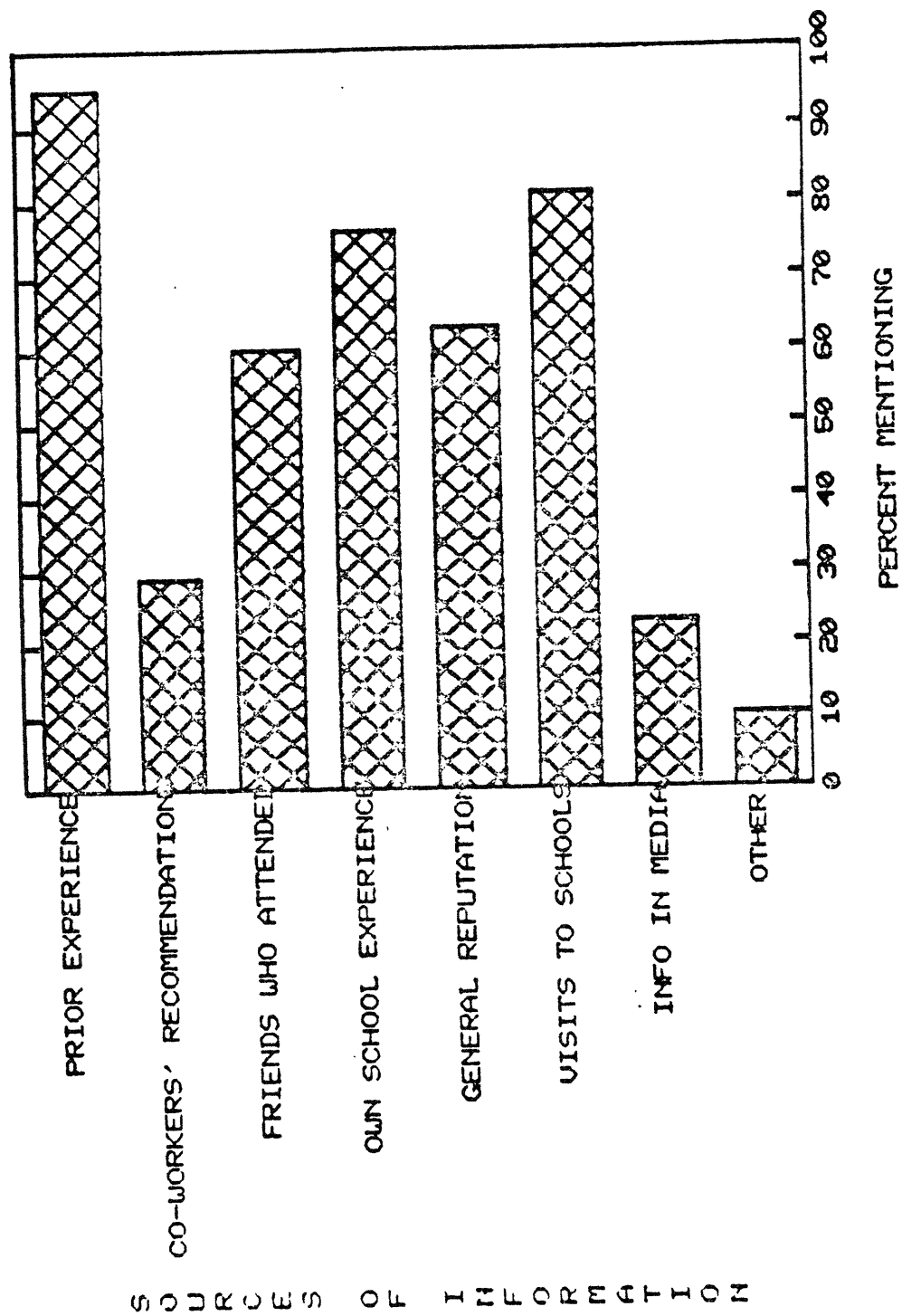


FIGURE 4.17 . SOURCES OF INFORMATION

D. GENERAL COMMENTS MADE BY RESPONDENTS

1. Characteristics Lacking among MBA's

Respondents generally agree that MBA's lack certain characteristics, irrespective of which schools they attended. As Table 4.12 illustrates, of 163 mentions made by the 95 respondents who answered Question 9, 126 fall into only five categories - humility, communication skills, interpersonal skills, experience, and decision-making abilities. The following analysis discusses each attribute listed in Table 4.12 in detail.

a. Humility, Patience, Realistic Expectations :

Over 50% of the respondents mentioned humility and realistic career expectations as characteristics which MBA's generally lack. Many stated their concerns succinctly :

- Humility !
- Patience.
- Greed.

Most referred to different aspects of the same underlying characteristics. One common aspect is a feeling that MBA's enter an organization expecting to advance to high levels too quickly :

	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS MENTIONING (OUT OF 95)	
HUMILITY, PATIENCE, etc.		50
Realistic Expectations	31	
Humility	19	
COMMUNICATION SKILLS		27
Oral & Written	7	
Written only	6	
Oral only	4	
Listening	2	
Communication in general	7	
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS		23
EXPERIENCE		15
APPLICATION & DECISION-MAKING		11
CAREER DEFINITION		9
MANAGEMENT SKILLS		7
PERSPECTIVE		7
OTHER :		
Balance		5
Theory/technical skills		4
Creativity		4
Time management		3
Others		6

TABLE 4.12 : CHARACTERISTICS LACKING AMONG MBA's

- [MBA's in general lack] a willingness to work their way up to CEO.
- A general lack of willingness to put in time doing the more mundane aspects of a job.
- Perception that the road to executive level is brief.
- Too many want to be generalists, consultants, presidents - they have to start somewhere.
- Many have the "I will be Chairman of the Board in a year or so" syndrome.
- A recognition that they must refine certain skills not achieved in school prior to becoming a high performing officer.
- Realistic sense of dues-paying.
- Often overrate the amount of responsibility they are prepared for.
- Realistic expectations of career development and mobility.
- Sense of reality about jobs, promotions, salaries.

Closely related to this is the feeling that MBA's lack humility in their day-to-day dealings with other people and that they consider their degrees as badges which should guarantee their success. Note that this arrogance attribute is not the same as "aggressiveness", a quality which is generally valued.

- MBA's have an overstated sense of self-importance and do not blend well into organizations.
- Superiority complex.
- A willingness to work hard and advance - this may often be categorized as a prima-donna mentality.

- I have often witnessed the attitude of "the world owes me something".
- Many feel their degree is a ticket to success.
- Our best hires possess "toughness" and "aggressiveness", flavored with enough humility so that the hire is not cocky.
- Their understanding of how much they don't know - they are long on aggression and too many times ego.
- An MBA is not a guaranteed ticket to anything - you make your opportunities on your own merit.

b. Communication Skills :

Some 28% mentioned the ability to communicate effectively as a skill which MBA's in general lack. As the table shows, 12 of the 27 respondents who referred to communication skills specified only one aspect (6 - writing ; 4 - oral ; 2 - listening), while 15 were concerned with communication skills as a whole. As will be discussed later, many made specific suggestions as to how an MBA program could develop these skills.

Most expressed the problem in one phrase only :

- Poor business writing abilities.
- Written and oral presentation skills.
- Ability to listen.
- An ability to articulate.

A few respondents referred more specifically to communication with different levels in an organization :

- Ability to communicate with top management.
- Ability to communicate with and relate to all levels of the organization (from clerk to Chairman).
- Stop using buzzwords.

c. Interpersonal Skills :

This category and several others, such as humility, communication skills and management abilities, are closely related. Some of the verbatim comments given in the discussions of other characteristics apply equally well here :

- MBA's have an overstated sense of self-importance and do not blend well into organizations.
- The ability to communicate with and relate to all levels of the organization.
- Getting people to work together - people management skills.

Most respondents stated the characteristic in a general way, such as "People skills", "Interpersonal skills", or "Human relations skills". Others were more specific :

- Empathy.
- Interpersonal sensitivity.
- Ability to get along with others.
- Flexibility and sensitivity.
- Awareness of one's impact on others.
- Sensitivity towards others' opinions.
- Sensitivity to corporate politics.
- Appreciation of the human relationships in a business.

d. Work Experience :

Respondents who mentioned experience as a lacking characteristic fell into two approximately equal groups. The first group simply mentioned experience as a desired, but lacking, attribute :

- The graduates have little or no visible business experience.
- Experience in line organizations.
- Real-world work experience.

The second group sees experience as a cause of the problems, not a problem in and of itself. In other words, lack of work experience is seen as a reason for the lack of other characteristics such as interpersonal skills and unrealistic career expectations :

- Lack of suitable industry related experience - too prone to assume that they can jump into a new industry and/or function right out of school.
- MBA's often overrate the amount of responsibility they are prepared for - experience is just as important as intelligence and education.

Only two respondents (both involved in the Information Systems area) mentioned the lack of experience in a specialized area as being a problem :

- Experience & knowledge of the computer industry, and a respect for these things.
- My particular needs are in I.S. - we still do not see the depth of coursework and experience in enough of the students interested in this line of work.

e. Application & Decision-making

Respondents see MBA's as generally poor at implementing ideas and taking action on their analyses. Graduates do not know how decisions are actually made in practice :

- There is no easy way to come to solutions - implementation of solutions is something MBA's are weakest at.
- The ability to row rather than steer the boat.

- Practical applications of decisions.
- Implementation of ideas.
- Ability to make qualitative decisions..
- The experience in applying/implementing decisions based on newly acquired techniques of analysis.
- Frequently students are naive as to the decision-making process in everyday business.
- Perception of how decisions are made by corporate executives.

f. Career Definition :

Closely related to the issue of unrealistic expectations is a lack of career direction and commitment :

- Tendency to consider unrealistic positions and work assignments during the interview process.
- Long-term commitment to consulting.
- Good understanding of one's goals.
- Career focus.
- Career decision-making.

g. Management Skills :

Consistent with the focus group attitudes and the survey results is the feeling that schools do not teach students how to manage :

- Getting people to work together.
- Leadership & management skills.
- General management skills - schools are producing staff consultants, not managers.
- People management skills.

h. Perspective :

Respondents feel that MBA's see their own activities in a narrow sense instead of in terms of the whole business :

- A broader view of the job as it relates to the industry.
- Lack of perspective - their careers, people in general.
- Diversity of, exposure to, and interest in the full breadth of business issues encountered in industry.
- Lack of placing specific assignment in context of overall situation (trees versus forest).
- A sense of the goals and objectives of the organization as opposed to their own goals.

i. Other Characteristics :

Respondents mentioned a number of other attributes :

Balance :

- Depth as well as breadth.
- Poor liberal arts background - too technical.

Technical Skills :

- Technical systems expertise.
- Theory/analytical skills - not statistics but economics, financial market theory.
- Quantitative skills.

Creativity :

- Major emphasis on creativity.
- Creative approaches to problem-solving.

Time Management :

- The ability to handle a variety of assignments at the same time.
- Ability to prioritize and manage time.

Others :

- Business intuition.
- Fast startup in new job.
- Persistence.
- Common sense.
- Ability to anticipate situations and plan for them.
- Knowledge of how to sell (versus marketing).

2. Improvements to Graduate Programs Suggested by Respondents

While some respondents left this question blank or simply stated that they do not know, 86 individuals completed the section and offered a total of 93 suggestions. Table 4.13 breaks these down into common areas. For some of the previously discussed lacking attributes, such as communication skills, there were a large number of associated concrete suggestions. For others, such as arrogance, there are very few ready solutions offered. The suggestions are related not only to business schools' programs, but also include admissions requirements, teaching methods, career guidance, etc.

In this section, the suggestions are not evaluated but rather presented in a verbatim form.

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS
MENTIONING (OUT OF 86)

COMMUNICATION SKILLS PROGRAMS	17
INTERPERSONAL SKILLS PROGRAMS	17
CASE METHOD	10
EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS	9
APPLICATION EMPHASIS	9
INTERNSHIP PROGRAMS	8
REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS	8
OTHER :	
Guest Speakers	5
Breadth Requirements	5
Career Guidance	4
Management Skills	4
Technical Education	4
Industry/Functional Concentration	3
Other	4

TABLE 4.13 : RESPONDENTS' SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

a. Communication Skills Programs :

This is one area where respondents made fairly specific suggestions. Most recommended some type of communications course :

- Creation of mandatory communicative skills course.
- Better writing and verbal training courses.
- Better writing programs.
- Instruct students on writing, presentation techniques, etc.
- A basic English composition course, followed by a business writing course.
- A course dedicated to business writing.
- Improved speaking and writing course.

Some suggested that writing style should be included as a factor in grading :

- Clarity and brevity rewarded in exam papers.
- Greater emphasis on clear, concise and logical presentation and analysis.
- Closer scrutiny by professors ; greater emphasis on writing (reward for excellence, penalty for inadequacy).

Talking in class is seen as a way of improving verbal skills :

- Force students to talk in class.
- Speaking in front of people. The case method at Harvard was a good experience for me - thinking on your feet - gives practice for communication under pressure.

Other suggestions :

- Panel interviews similar to medical schools could determine interpersonal and communication skills.
- Graduates headed for consulting should be required to write a report for a hypothetical project and then have it reviewed by a professional editor.
- Instruct professors on methods of instruction. Most are extremely inadequate in communications themselves.

b. Interpersonal Skills Programs :

Many suggestions were made on how a school can improve the interpersonal skills of its graduates. Most individuals found it difficult to be very specific. Over half of the comments related to the introduction or improvement of courses in the

organizational behavior area.

- More emphasis (courses) on human relations skills.
- Offer a course assessing the graduates' own management styles and how they could improve their interpersonal dealings with others.
- More courses in the behavioral area.
- Develop more in-depth courses on human behavior in organizations and organizational development.
- Interpersonal skills training.
- Take the organizational/management process side of the program out of the big lecture format and make it a required, experiential piece of the program.

Others did not suggest courses per se, but rather an increased sensitivity in general :

- Simply a matter of continually stressing this factor.
- Administrators need to understand that some of these skills are developed best with techniques that are new and not part of the traditional academic approach. Psychologists could help here.
- Program should include some emphasis on and exposure to organizational behavior.
- Increased emphasis on interpersonal skills in program.
- Heavier emphasis on O.B.

c. Case Method :

Respondents use terms such as "cases", "role-playing", "simulation", and "class participation" somewhat interchangeably. In this report, however, they have been split into different sections since they are not all equivalent from an implementation point of view, even though they address the same basic problem areas. It is evident from the following verbatim comments that the case method is seen as a cure-all for a number of problems such as communication, balance, real-world application, and interpersonal skills :

- Case studies should be encouraged to increase interaction. Also demonstrates that no one solution is right.
- Introduction of cases and simulated situations where dogmatic "textbook" answers do not necessarily apply, and compromise and dialogue are needed for a working solution.
- Some additional exposure to the case method and to many of the non-quantitative aspects of business.
- More real-time cases.
- Greater emphasis on case studies and class participation ; less on lectures.
- Case studies and business games where students interact with business people who review their analysis.
- Better emphasis on where analytical techniques being taught fit in through case examples.

d. Experience Requirements :

Many respondents feel that admissions boards should give more weight to work experience :

- Require more experience or require a work-study coop like Northeastern.
- The admissions committee would do well to rate prior experience high on the list of criteria for accepting new students.
- A careful look/analysis at applicants who have not had viable business experience.
- Require either older students or more experience (5-6 years).
- Admit more students with previous experience.
- Change entrance requirements - management experience should be required, not just work experience.

e. Application Emphasis :

Comments made by recruiters demonstrate that they see analysis of a problem and the use of that analysis to implement decisions as being two very distinct activities. Many feel that management programs do not adequately train students to assume the latter role and suggest that application and implementation emphasis be given in coursework:

- Structure more classes around implementation scenarios rather than reviews of analytical techniques.

- Emphasize practical applications of theory.
- Stress that there is no easy way to come to solutions.
- More practical exercises and fewer lessons in the "frontier of business theory".
- More rigorous grilling by professors on solutions and then ability to be implemented.

f. Internship Programs :

One other way to provide students with a real-world orientation is through work experience with organizations during the MBA program, either during summer or on a project basis :

- Relevant job experience during summer breaks. Also a co-op program might be established for MBA's.
- Include more field work in real-world situations.
- Good summer job program.
- Clinical programs i.e. work/study.
- More course-related projects working with real business problems within cooperating companies.
- Student internship programs may be useful for the student to familiarize him/her with the actual business decision/making process in industry.
- More hands-on work experience integrated into the MBA program.

g. Realistic Expectations :

Several respondents suggested ideas to address the problem of arrogance and unrealistic career expectations :

- Change attitudes and expectation levels so that new graduates are more willing to do the less exciting work early on.
- Temper courses in arrogance.
- More discussions perhaps with people who are in organizations, about the keys to promotion and general business norms.
- Include information on corporate politics and on realistic career tracks in coursework.
- Should have some exposure to what the rest of the working world thinks of the "MBA hotshot".
- Stress the need to sell yourself and not the degree.
- Provide realistic salary expectations.

h. Other Suggestions :

As Table 4.13 indicates, respondents addressed a number of other areas which could be improved through various programs and policies :

Guest Speakers :

- More seminars or guests discussing reality.
- More exposure to the world - guest lecturers.
- The addition of seminars taught by people from industry.

Require Breadth at Admission :

- Accept people with diverse interests.
- Admit diverse student body.
- De-emphasize pure academic qualifications of candidates in favor of combined academic and personal achievement.
- I am not certain that a good business program could or should try to produce well-rounded individuals. That broadening has to come at the undergrad level and below.

Career Guidance :

- Coursework on career focus.
- Offer career counseling not just placement.
- Better career guidance, advice and education from placement office.

Technical Education :

- Teach theory/analytical skills.
- Programs should be much more aware of the best management techniques.
- Improve training in technical expertise.

Offer Industry/Functional Concentrations :

- Strengthen an MIS-MBA concentration striving for the equivalent of today's finance-MBA curricula.
- Students should concentrate in both functional and industry areas during the last semester.

Other :

- More team-oriented assignments.
- Make a survey course in information management mandatory.
- A course in the sales process.
- Time management courses.

3. Additional Comments made by Respondents

About 25 management education in general while others referred specifically to Sloan. Many of the comments expanded on earlier ideas, while some offered interesting perspectives and these are reproduced here.

Several respondents expressed concern about the high salaries demanded by MBA's from top schools :

- Students are too dollar focused. Placement offices and faculty reinforce this emphasis.
- Given economic conditions, I take pride in finding candidates from lesser schools or less complete backgrounds ... I can get these people at a bargain entry-level salary without impairing my department's performance.
- Salaries are escalating at a pace where corporations someday may say, "recruiting the MBA is not worth it".

A few respondents commented on the questionnaire itself. Most of these stated that their perceptions are based on very limited experience and may therefore be of little use. Two respondents complained about the negatively stated questions while several expressed their appreciation for the opportunity to participate.

Many Comments about Sloan were very positive :

- Concentrate on your admissions to get the best, most well-rounded people and maintain your stature.

- Sloan's great ! Teach your students to be humble as well as smart.
- I think Sloan generally turns out valuable and interesting graduates.
- The Sloan School is certainly on the right track for us as a consulting firm and for management in general.

Some were not as generous :

- Sloan grads don't know
 - how big a \$100 million company is
 - what P & G does
 - marketing
 - how to relate to clients as people
 Sloan grads do know
 - linear programming
 - CAPM
 I think if all Japanese management went to Sloan, Detroit would be a winner. They don't and it's not. Quantitative techniques will never make up for smarts.
- Sloan suffers from an external perception of its grads as tunnel-visioned specialists. The implication is that a Sloan graduate may be pegged into a slot that has less opportunity for big picture work or rapid advancement and varied experience.

Several respondents claimed that they are not very well informed about Sloan. Impressions are superficial and are often confused with perceptions of M.I.T. itself :

- My perception of Sloan reflects perceptions of M.I.T. undergraduates. I cannot remember any of my well-rounded friends or acquaintances even considering Sloan - my perception is that it attracts engineers.

- To some degree Sloan's student body and reputation are related to the university's general reputation.
- I don't know enough about Sloan. You need better P.R.

To a large degree, the additional comments reproduced here sum up the perceptions of Sloan which have been identified both in the focus group interviews as well as quantitatively elsewhere in the survey analysis.

Notes - Chapter 4

1. Hauser, John R. and Koppelman, Frank S., Alternative Perceptual Mapping Techniques : Relative Accuracy and Usefulness, Journal of Marketing Research, XVI : 495-506, November 1979.
2. The "eigenvalue rule" is a rule of thumb method for determining the number of dimensions. The cutoff is when the fraction of variance explained by the next factor falls below $1/(\text{number of attributes})$. This point corresponds statistically to when the "eigenvalue", a number associated with each factor, falls below 1.0. The "scree test" is another rule of thumb method to determine the number of factors. In this case, factors are retained up to the point where the incremental contribution levels off.
3. Urban, Glen L. and Hauser, John R., Design and Marketing of New Products, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1980, p. 244.

CHAPTER 5 : SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The picture that emerges from both the qualitative and quantitative analyses is very different from that which emerges from the more traditional measures of success, such as starting salaries, recruiter-to-student ratios, percentage of graduates placed, etc. The perceptions of recruiters are not necessarily based on fact, but they should be taken very seriously since they guide behavior and choice. There is some evidence suggesting that Sloan graduates in particular are evaluated based only on superficial knowledge and limited experience. However, the perceptions are fairly consistent across all functions and all industries. Moreover, the perceptions of those who do and those who do not recruit at Sloan are not very different. It is possible that people filter and interpret their information and experiential data to more closely match their preconceived images of graduates from Sloan programs, but, for them, the perceptions are real. We cannot dismiss them, irrespective of whether they are true or not.

There are very large differences in perceptions of the various schools. The graduates of any given program are, to a large extent, stereotyped and seen as appropriate or inappropriate for a given function or industry. As with most traded goods and services, the "products" and not the "processes" are important to "consumers". In terms of business school

graduates, recruiters are not knowledgeable about or interested in the MBA programs themselves, but they are concerned only with the final products - graduates.

The range of skills, personality traits, and abilities demanded of graduates by recruiters is considerable. Analytical ability, an area in which we consider Sloan graduates to excel, is only one of these attributes, and, as the regression results indicated, not even the most important one. To a large extent, recruiters look for a balance of these "hard" skills and the other "soft" abilities. At the same time, they believe that excellence in one part of the equation implies deficiencies in the other. Thus business schools are faced with a substantial challenge.

The perceptions of Sloan graduates illustrate this unidimensional phenomenon. Our analytical and technical abilities are known to be excellent, but we are viewed as being very narrow in focus, badly lacking in interpersonal, communication, and management skills, and inadequately prepared for applying analysis and implementing solutions in real-world situations.

It would of course be possible to come up with a number of specific suggestions which address some of the problem areas, but this is not done here for several reasons :

- We at Sloan need to compare recruiters' perceptions of Sloan with our own perceptions of our graduates' abilities to see whether we are being accurately perceived or misperceived. The best approach to the former may involve making real and significant program changes, while the latter may imply a communication strategy only ;

- If a change strategy is in fact needed, it would have to be far-reaching and comprehensive, extending from admissions procedures, through program structure and teaching methods to the placement process itself, and involving communication with potential students, various Sloan constituent groups, and corporate decision-makers ;

- It is recognized that all institutions, and especially universities, are political by nature. No strategy could ever be successfully implemented without the full support of all constituencies in the Sloan community, including faculty, administrative personnel, students and even people at M.I.T. itself. The first step in this process has to be global awareness of the problem.

It is hoped that this study is valuable in raising the issues and in helping to understand the reality of recruiters' views of Sloan's output. Our faculty and students are unquestionably excellent problem solvers and, with the information from this and other studies currently being conducted, we are in a good position to confront the issues head-on.

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April 6, 1982

Mr. Albert M. Lewis
Management Recruiter
AT&T Long Lines
Room 5A100
Bedminster, NJ 07921

Dear Mr. Lewis:

The M.I.T. Sloan School of Management is interested in the needs of the business community and is conducting a study in order to understand your opinions of management programs and their graduates. You can help us by filling out the enclosed questionnaire.

The number of people being asked to participate in the study is small and each has been selected to produce representative results. Your answers are therefore very important to us and your candid views will be instrumental in improving our programs. There are no right or wrong answers. It is your views that are important to us. There is no identification on the questionnaire so that you are assured of complete confidentiality.

The questionnaire takes less than 30 minutes to complete. We hope that you will find the time in the next day or two to fill it out and return it in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Thank you very much for your interest and efforts.

Sincerely,

Alvin J. Silk
Professor of Management Science and
Associate Dean

Enclosure

MANAGEMENT EDUCATION SURVEY

We are pleased that you have decided to complete this questionnaire. It gives you a chance to express your feelings about different management education programs and their graduates.

Page 2 of the questionnaire asks you to evaluate the Sloan School on a number of factors. Pages 3 through 5 ask you to evaluate three other comparable business schools of your choice. Feel free to evaluate a school even if you would not hire a graduate from the program.

If you are not familiar enough with the programs or graduates of three other schools, evaluate only those schools that you feel comfortable evaluating.

There is a separate rating sheet for each school. You will be presented with a series of statements that may be, or may not be, true of the particular program. Please consider each statement and place an "X" in the box that you feel most accurately reflects your agreement or disagreement with the statement as it pertains to the program you are currently rating.

For example consider the following

The school has modern facilities.

<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Neither Agree nor Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
[]	[X]	[]	[]	[]
a	b	c	d	e

The respondent has placed an "X" in box "b", indicating he (or she) does not believe the school has modern facilities.

If you feel you do not have enough information to answer a question, check box "c"—"neither agree nor disagree".

Please remember to fill out the name of the school you are rating at the top of the page and also to complete the short questions on the last pages of the questionnaire.

RATINGS FOR: THE SLOAN SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT

Page 2

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The graduate has little understanding of the industry, the company, and the profession.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2. The program teaches the most sophisticated management techniques.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3. The graduate exhibits the interpersonal skills necessary for effective management.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4. Graduates have difficulty in defining the problem in a complex, unstructured situation.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5. The graduate thinks narrowly about tasks rather than in terms of the whole business.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
6. The program develops analytical and problem-solving abilities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
7. The graduate is not well prepared to choose his/her career.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
8. The graduate will have well-developed skills in oral and written communication.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
9. The graduate is able to make real world decisions, not merely support decision-making.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
10. Graduates of this program are mature and generally have a lot of business experience.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
11. The class does not have a broad mix of students.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
12. The graduate is confident, aggressive and has a leadership instinct.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
13. The program does not teach management skills such as hiring, firing, motivating and guiding people.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
14. The graduate demonstrates entrepreneurial instincts.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
15. There is considerable pressure on students to participate in class - expressing, defending and modifying their positions.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
16. The graduate is able to fit into an organization and is flexible in a variety of one-on-one and group situations.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
17. The placement process is hospitable toward recruiting organizations.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
18. The graduate is unlikely to be a candidate for general management.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
19. The program exposes students to the real world, both inside the classroom and in extracurricular activities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
20. The graduate does not have a broad background and is more of a specialist than a generalist.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Ratings for: _____

Page 3

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The graduate has little understanding of the industry, the company, and the profession.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2. The program teaches the most sophisticated management techniques.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3. The graduate exhibits the interpersonal skills necessary for effective management.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4. Graduates have difficulty in defining the key problem in a complex, unstructured situation.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5. The graduate thinks narrowly about tasks rather than in terms of the whole business.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
6. The program develops analytical and problem-solving abilities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
7. The graduate is not well prepared to choose his/her career.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
8. The graduate will have well-developed skills in oral and written communication.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
9. The graduate is able to make real world decisions, not merely support decision-making.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
10. Graduates of this program are mature and generally have a lot of business experience.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
11. The class does not have a broad mix of students.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
12. The graduate is confident, aggressive and has a leadership instinct.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
13. The program does not teach management skills such as hiring, firing, motivating and guiding people.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
14. The graduate demonstrates entrepreneurial instincts.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
15. There is considerable pressure on students to participate in class - expressing, defending and modifying their positions.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
16. The graduate is able to fit into an organization and is flexible in a variety of one-on-one and group situations.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
17. The placement process is hospitable toward recruiting organizations.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
18. The graduate is unlikely to be a candidate for general management.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
19. The program exposes students to the real world, both inside the classroom and in extracurricular activities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
20. The graduate does not have a broad background and is more of a specialist than a generalist.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

Ratings for: _____

Page 4

- | | Strongly
Disagree | Disagree | Neither
Agree
nor
Disagree | Agree | Strongly
Agree |
|---|----------------------|----------|-------------------------------------|-------|-------------------|
| 1. The graduate has little understanding of the industry, the company, and the profession. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 2. The program teaches the most sophisticated management techniques. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 3. The graduate exhibits the interpersonal skills necessary for effective management. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 4. Graduates have difficulty in defining the problem in a complex, unstructured situation. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 5. The graduate thinks narrowly about tasks rather than in terms of the whole business. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 6. The program develops analytical and problem-solving abilities. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 7. The graduate is not well prepared to choose his/her career. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 8. The graduate will have well-developed skills in oral and written communication. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 9. The graduate is able to make real world decisions, not merely support decision-making. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 10. Graduates of this program are mature and generally have a lot of business experience. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 11. The class does not have a broad mix of students. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 12. The graduate is confident, aggressive and has a leadership instinct. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 13. The program does not teach management skills such as hiring, firing, motivating and guiding people. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 14. The graduate demonstrates entrepreneurial instincts. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 15. There is considerable pressure on students to participate in class - expressing, defending and modifying their positions. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 16. The graduate is able to fit into an organization and is flexible in a variety of one-on-one and group situations. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 17. The placement process is hospitable toward recruiting organizations. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 18. The graduate is unlikely to be a candidate for general management. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 19. The program exposes students to the real world, both inside the classroom and in extracurricular activities. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |
| 20. The graduate does not have a broad background and is more of a specialist than a generalist. | [] | [] | [] | [] | [] |

Ratings for: _____

Page 5

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The graduate has little understanding of the industry, the company, and the profession.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
2. The program teaches the most sophisticated management techniques.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
3. The graduate exhibits the interpersonal skills necessary for effective management.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
4. Graduates have difficulty in defining the problem in a complex, unstructured situation.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
5. The graduate thinks narrowly about tasks rather than in terms of the whole business.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
6. The program develops analytical and problem-solving abilities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
7. The graduate is not well prepared to choose his/her career.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
8. The graduate will have well-developed skills in oral and written communication.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
9. The graduate is able to make real world decisions, not merely support decision-making.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
10. Graduates of this program are mature and generally have a lot of business experience.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
11. The class does not have a broad mix of students.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
12. The graduate is confident, aggressive and has a leadership instinct.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
13. The program does not teach management skills such as hiring, firing, motivating and guiding people.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
14. The graduate demonstrates entrepreneurial instincts.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
15. There is considerable pressure on students to participate in class - expressing, defending and modifying their positions.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
16. The graduate is able to fit into an organization and is flexible in a variety of one-on-one and group situations.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
17. The placement process is hospitable toward recruiting organizations.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
18. The graduate is unlikely to be a candidate for general management.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
19. The program exposes students to the real world, both inside the classroom and in extracurricular activities.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]
20. The graduate does not have a broad background and is more of a specialist than a generalist.	[]	[]	[]	[]	[]

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We are interested in your preferences for the schools you have just rated. Please fill in the names of the programs in descending order of preference, i.e., from most favored to least favored. Be sure to include Sloan School on the list.

most preferred 1. _____
 2. _____
 3. _____
 least preferred 4. _____

Our sample is small. The following short questions are important because they enable us to better understand your evaluations and to project your responses to the population as a whole.

- Strongly
Disagree
 Disagree
 Neither Agree
Nor Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly
Agree
1. The differences among the education at major management schools are of little importance compared to the differences among individual graduates within each school. (Check one). [] [] [] [] []
 2. Most of the success of business school graduates comes from their innate abilities and prior experiences rather than from the effects of their graduate management education. (Check one). [] [] [] [] []
 3. Which of the following best describes your own relationship with business school graduates? (Check one).
 - ___ My main functional area of work is recruiting business school graduates.
 - ___ I participate in hiring decisions of graduates for my company.
 - ___ I employ business school graduates as subordinates.
 4. How did you obtain the information about the programs (or their graduates) that you evaluated on this questionnaire? (Please check all applicable).

___ Prior experiences with MBA graduates	___ General reputation
___ Recommendations of people at my company	___ Visits to the schools
___ Friends who have attended the business schools	___ Published information in the media
___ From my own business school experiences	___ Other, (please specify)

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5. What is your main functional area of work? (Check one).

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing | <input type="checkbox"/> Finance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering/Research | <input type="checkbox"/> General Management |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Manufacturing | <input type="checkbox"/> Consulting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel | <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Information Systems | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please specify) |

6. What is the primary activity of your company? (Check one).

MANUFACTURINGNONMANUFACTURING

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Electrical/Electronics | <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Banking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chemical/Pharmaceutical | <input type="checkbox"/> Investment Banking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous Consumer Goods | <input type="checkbox"/> Consulting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Textile/Paper | <input type="checkbox"/> Computer-Related Services |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Accounting & Auditing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous Financial Services |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Health/Education |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Other services |

7. At which business schools does your company recruit?

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

8. At which business schools do you personally recruit?

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. _____ | 4. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 5. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 6. _____ |

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9. What characteristics do you feel are lacking among recent MBA's your company has hired (or MBA's in general)?

10. How could a graduate program be improved so as to better develop these characteristics?

11. Please include any other comments you care to make.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN IMPROVING MANAGEMENT EDUCATION

Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Sloan School of Management, Room E53-350
Cambridge, Mass 02139



Last week we mailed you a questionnaire asking your opinions about graduate management education.

If you have already completed and returned it to us, please accept our sincere thanks. If not, please do so today. Because you are one of a small, but representative, group of business people whose help we are requesting, it is extremely important that your opinions be included in this study.

If by some chance you did not receive the questionnaire, please call me at (617)253-2929 and I will get another in the mail to you today.

Sincerely,

Lawrence R. Kahn
Survey Coordinator